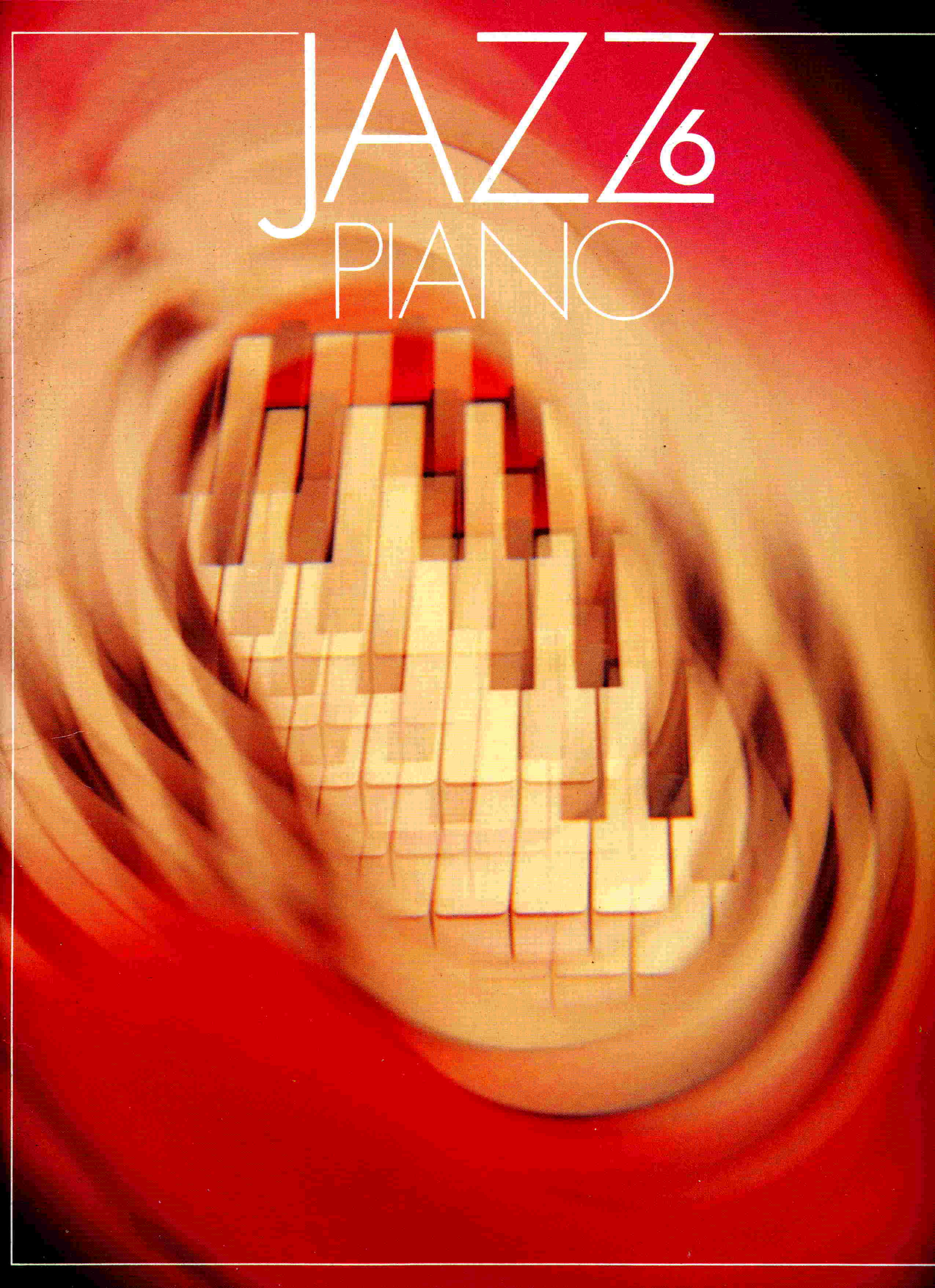
VISIT…

JAZZ 6
PIANO



JAZZ 6 PIANO

TRANSCRIBED by BRIAN PRIESTLEY

For this series of books, Brian Priestley has painstakingly transcribed note-for-note superb recorded performances by innovative jazz pianists, like Art Tatum, Jelly Roll Morton, Thelonious Monk, John Lewis, Duke Ellington, Oscar Peterson, Chick Corea, Earl Hines and many others whose creative brilliance spans decades of jazz history.

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BRIAN PRIESTLEY is a well-known broadcaster, and has written biographies of Charles Mingus, Charlie Parker and John Coltrane as well as the books Jazz On Record: A History, and (with Ian Carr and Digby Fairweather) Jazz: The Essential Companion. He is also a pianist who leads his own group, playing at such clubs as Ronnie Scotts, Pizza Express and the Bass Clef, and teaches jazz piano for Goldsmiths' College, University of London.

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JAZZ PIANO 6

It is perhaps reassuring that even the great pianists play wrong notes occasionally. Since these solos are transcribed from actual recordings, wrong notes played cleanly are retained while misfingered notes are represented by 'x'. Notes played very lightly ('ghosted') are shown in brackets.

The tempo markings are in each case those of the recorded performances, but it is worth pointing out that with due care and attention to timing and phrasing, each solo can be made to swing successfully at as much as 40% less than the original speed.

Chord sequences have been shown in a relatively simple form, even where there is considerable deviation in the piano part. In this way, the deviations may be appreciated as such, and accompanying players such as bassists or guitarists can have a basic sequence to work from. With the exception of a couple of shorter pieces, the chord symbols are only given for the first chorus. The intention is that even the pianist should memorize the sequence, and apply its lessons not only to the subsequent transcribed choruses but also, as soon as possible, to his or her own improvisations.

MEADE LUX LEWIS
What better person than Lewis to start a book containing 12 pianists playing the 12-bar blues in all 12 keys? (Incidentally, each of the previous five books includes one 12-bar blues.) Lewis was of the generation who were equally adept at playing blues and boogies, functioning as a one-man dance-band, or working in a jazz group with rhythm-section and horns. This reflective solo performance from 1939 first saw the light of day on Mosaic MR3-103, and contrasts with the driving up-tempos for which he was best known.

CECIL TAYLOR
Probably the most innovative and abstract pianist of the last 30 years, Taylor is seen here in one of his simpler, straightforward early recordings. **Things Ain't What They Used To Be** (Candid 9017) was done in 1961, and this first solo after the ensemble shows direct links with Thelonious Monk (right-hand phrasing) and Duke Ellington (left-hand voicing). Because of the double-tempo feel of the opening chorus, the start bears a coincidental resemblance to bars 5 - 8 of the Eubie Blake solo in **Jazz Piano 4**.

DUKE ELLINGTON
Still underrated in terms of his piano work (as opposed to bandleading and composing), Ellington recorded this track towards the end of his life in 1972 (Pablo 2335-728). It is only bassist Ray Brown who plays the tune of **See See Rider**, while bars 1 - 12 are a theme Ellington introduced as far back as 1940 into his duet with Jimmy Blanton, **Mr.J.B. Blues**. Its root-notes are played only by the bass on record, but have been shown as a left-hand part here.

OTIS SPANN
Spann did all his group work in blues bands, mainly with Muddy Waters, although **Otis Blues** comes from one of his fine unaccompanied albums (Candid 9025). It is the first of several examples in this book of the heavy quaver-triplet rhythm of the blues, which gave rise to the "uneven quavers" incorporated into jazz from the 1910s onwards. Within this approach, Spann deploys a veritable arsenal of right-hand textures which emulate the pitch manipulation of blues singers.

RAY CHARLES
As well as a classic in its own right, the 1959 **What'd I Say** is a historically important example of abandoning the "uneven 8th-notes" in favour of the equal 8ths of Latin music. This had already begun to occur in jazz and pop, but Ray Charles made it work in a blues context. The six-chorus solo here is longer than on the hit single, but can be heard in this unedited form on Atlantic 8054 and possibly some other LPs as well.

BUD POWELL
After its introduction based on the whole-tone scale, **Dance Of The Infidels** develops into an excellent example of a typically complex bebop sequence developed from the blues (bars 9 - 20), plus a 2-bar extension which is dropped during the improvisation; the early Miles Davis tune **Sippin' At Bells** uses the same chord-sequence. This September 1953 broadcast version (on ESP/BASE 3035) has the tune actually played by the pianist rather than by other instruments, and allows him a longer solo than on the original recording.

HERBIE HANCOCK
Hancock's style can be seen as a direct outgrowth of Bud Powell's single-note right-hand lines, plus some influence from the unpredictable phrase-lengths of Lennie Tristano and Bill Evans combined with great rhythmic verve (for example, bars 35 -36). **For Spee's Sake** (recorded with Freddie Hubbard in 1962 on Blue Note BST84115) shows one of the simple alterations of the blues sequence popularised by the modal jazz of John Coltrane (compare **Tunji** below). Here, bars 5 - 6 and 9 all move to the VI♭ of the home key, making the piece sound bitonal.

ALBERT AMMONS
Like his partner Meade Lux Lewis, Ammons was equally a solo boogie-woogie player and a leader of jazz-blues groups. His virtuoso 1939 performance of **Suitcase Blues** (reissued on Mosaic MR3-103) is based on a much earlier recording by Hersal Thomas who died in 1926, and its versatility in varying the left-hand pattern speaks for itself. In order to show the shape of the complete piece with the use of repeated sections, the liberties Ammons takes in repeating bars 1 - 2, 8 - 10 and 20 - 22 (the last phrase different each of the four times it is played) have not been shown here.

JIMMY YANCEY
Although based on a strong quaver-triplet feel, Yancey's playing has a gentler, more melancholy sound than the pianists who followed him (such as Ammons and Lewis), due to his typical right-hand melodic phrases. The three choruses here constitute the solo passage following his even more melancholy vocal on **Crying In My Sleep** (recently reissued on RCA Bluebird NL88334). The last two bars represent his signature ending which always resolved on to E♭7, whether the rest of the piece was in A♭ or C or even E♭.

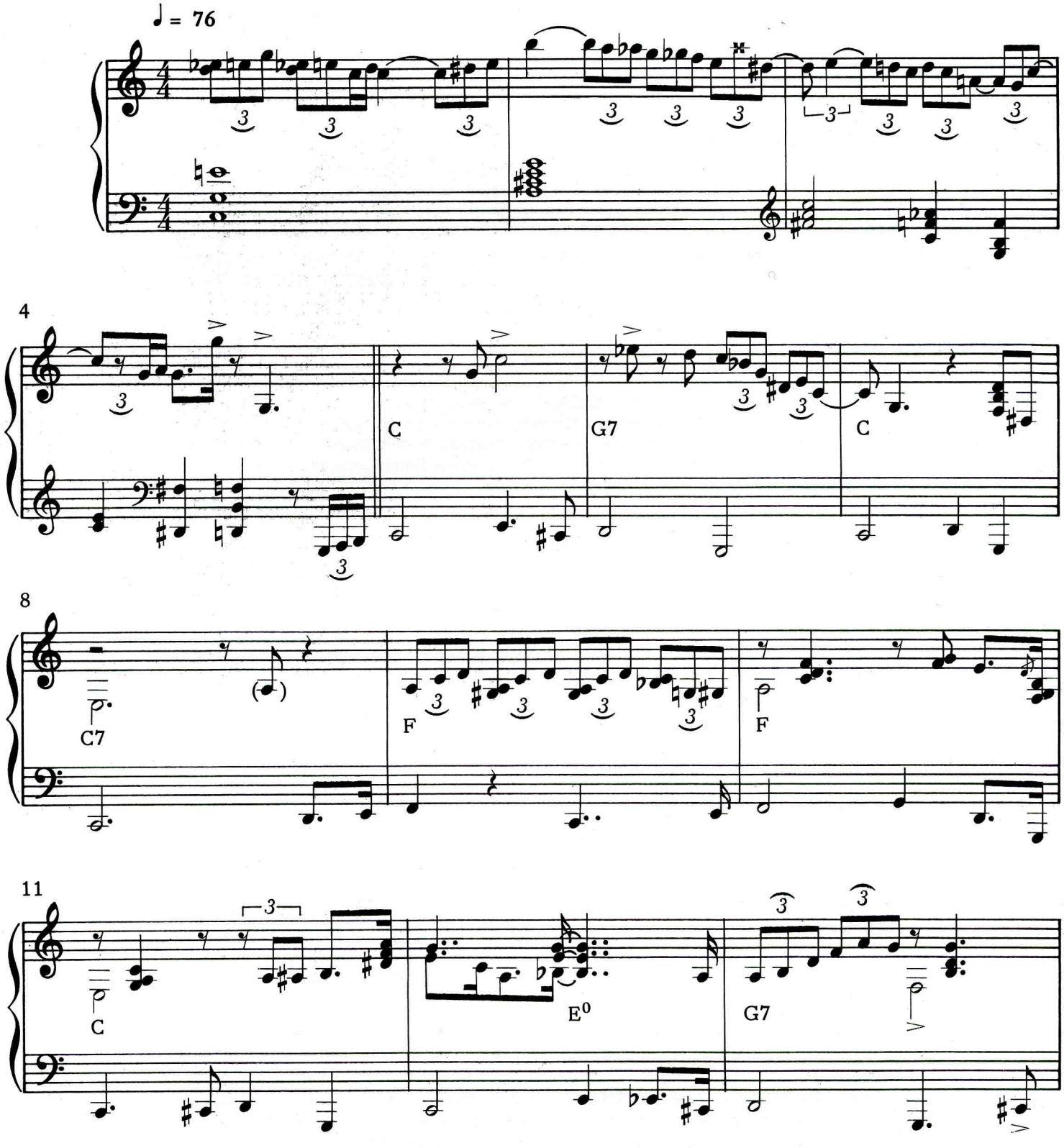
THELONIOUS MONK
One of the most famous blues ever written, **Blue Monk** is now more often played by horns than on the piano. In this 1959 unaccompanied version by the composer (Riverside OJC231) he makes a careful and precise distinction between uneven and even 8th-notes, for instance in the opening theme; an attempt has been made to represent this through the accentuation marks, but is advisable to study the record. This will also demonstrate that bar 84 is followed by a virtual repeat of the opening 24 bars, but not exactly.

McCOY TYNER
A good example of Tyner's typical textures, **Tunji** also shows the basic blues chords with a couple of amendments: C7 instead of F♯7 in bar 6, F7 for B7 in bar 8, and the descending sequence in bars 21-24. (These bars correspond to the second half of bar 3, second half of bar 4 and bars 11-12 at the normal rate of harmonic change, because the double-time feel has been written out as two 24-bar choruses.) Within the new 4/4 pulse, Tyner's solo (recorded with John Coltrane on Jasmine JAS10) is based on the uneven quaver feel.

BRIAN PRIESTLEY
Unlike **Blooz For Dook** in **Jazz Piano 4**, this piece is directly comparable with a record (Cadillac SGC1021, which also includes a new version of **Blooz For Dook**). Only the last 12 bars here represent the improvisation which is on the album, which was "Take 2" in recording terminology, whereas bars 1 - 6 of the transcription come from "Take 1". It wasn't until copying them out that I discovered some ideas from Take 1 being improved on in Take 2 - whether this is **Too** (or even Two) **Much** is up to you to decide.

Blues Part V

by MEADE LUX LEWIS



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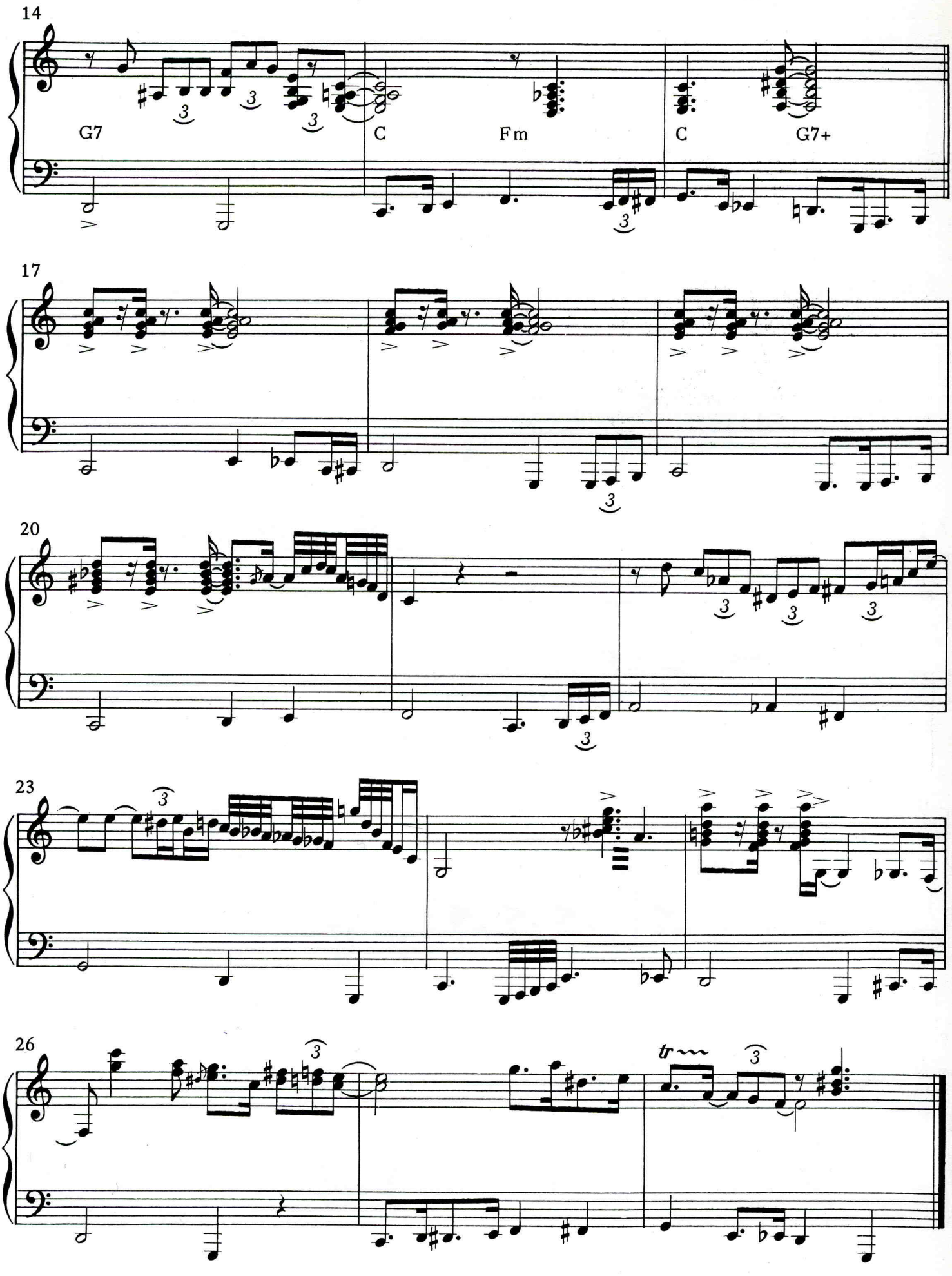
14
G7
C
Fm
C
G7+
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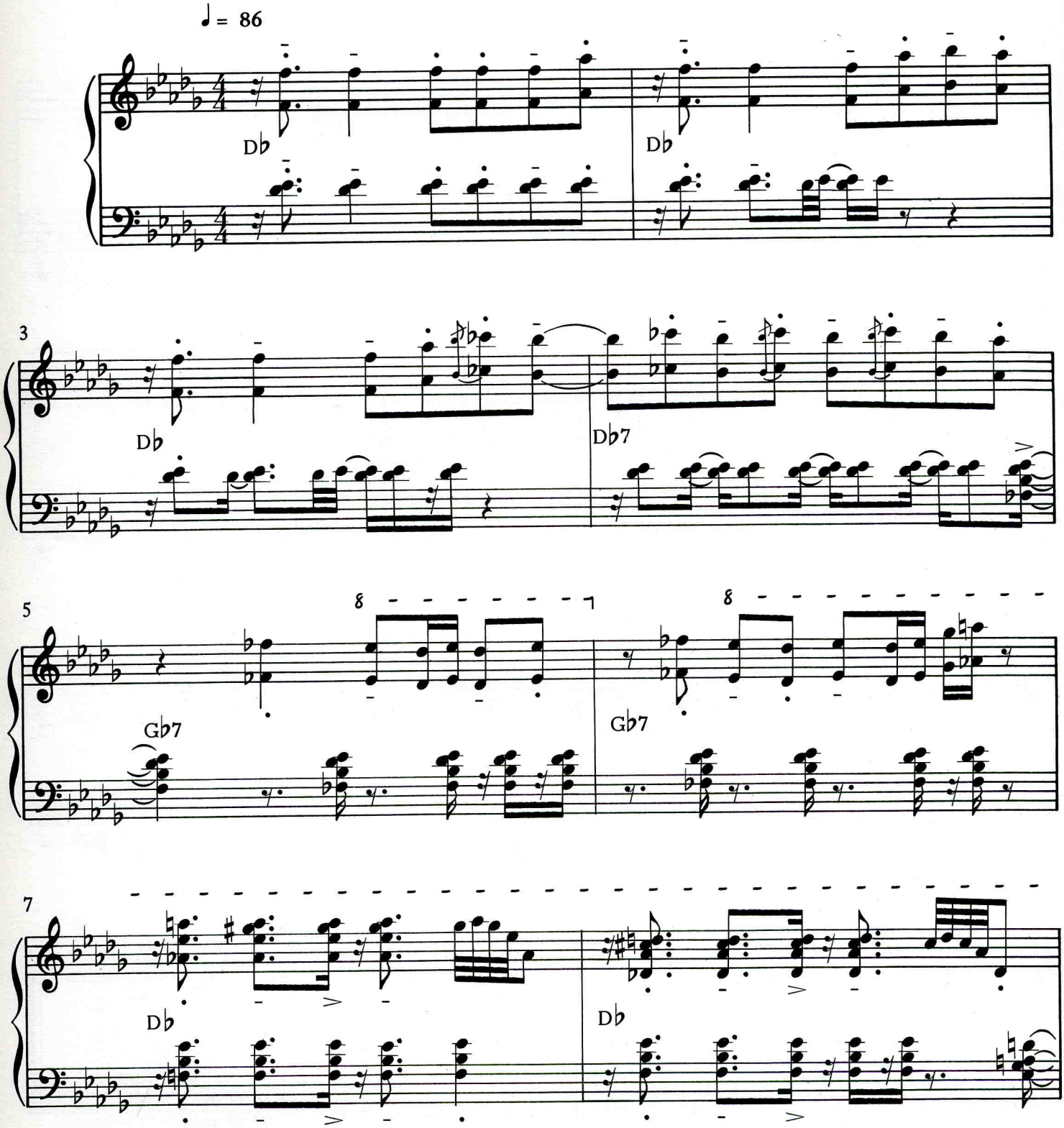
tr

Things Ain't What They Used To Be

Words by TED PERSONS
Music by MERCER ELLINGTON



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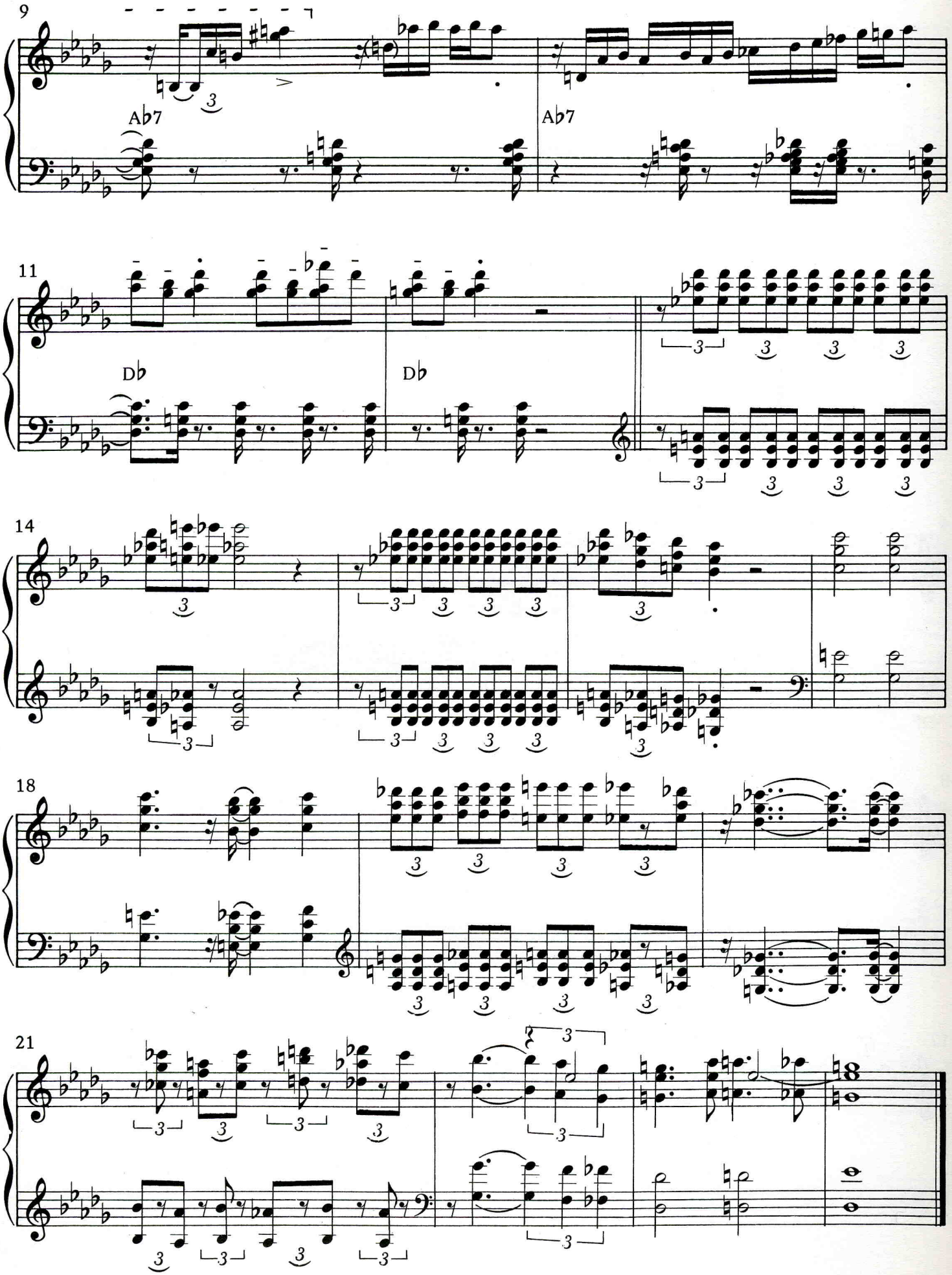
9
Ab7
Ab7
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Db
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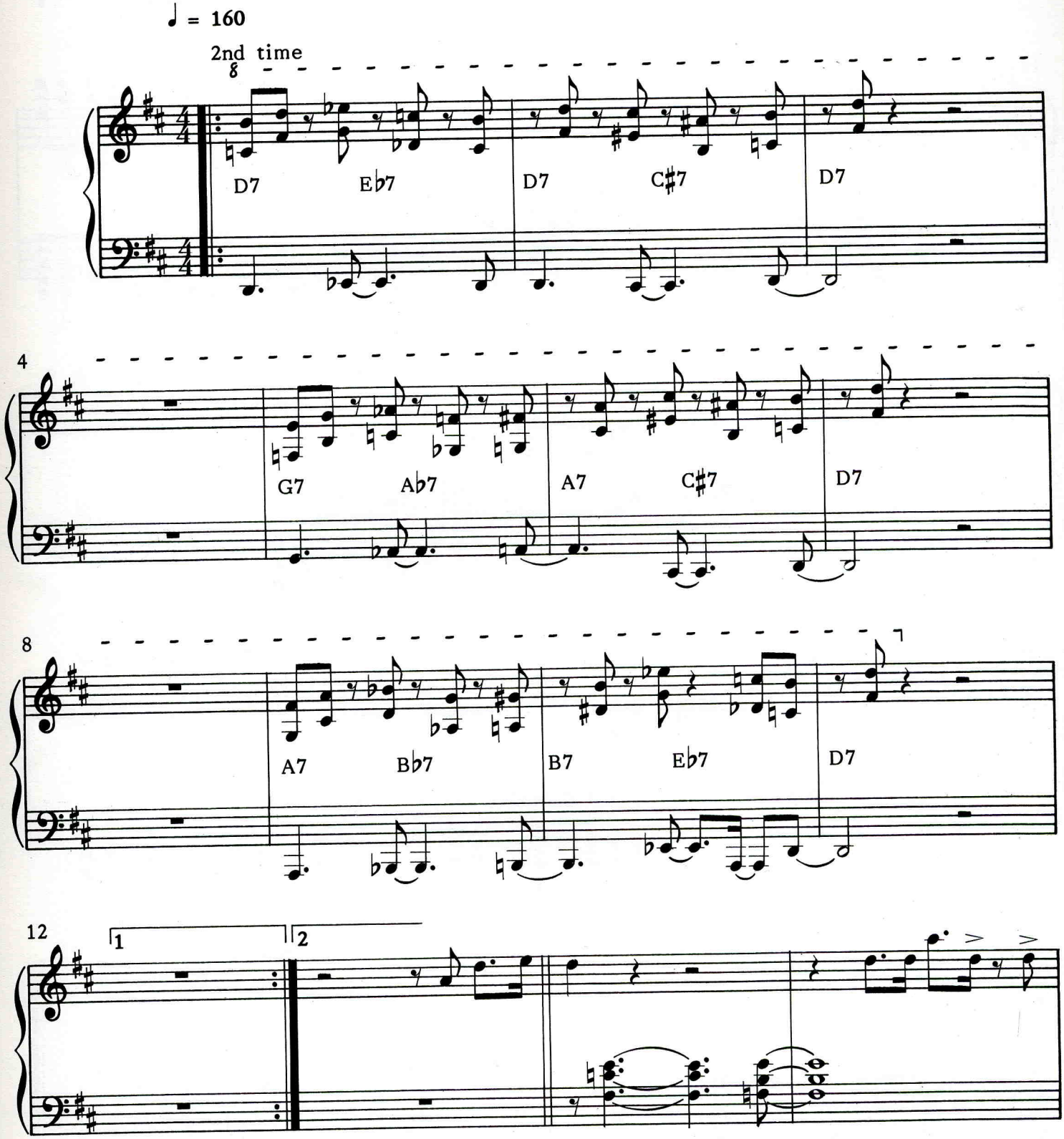
21

See See Rider

by RAINEY



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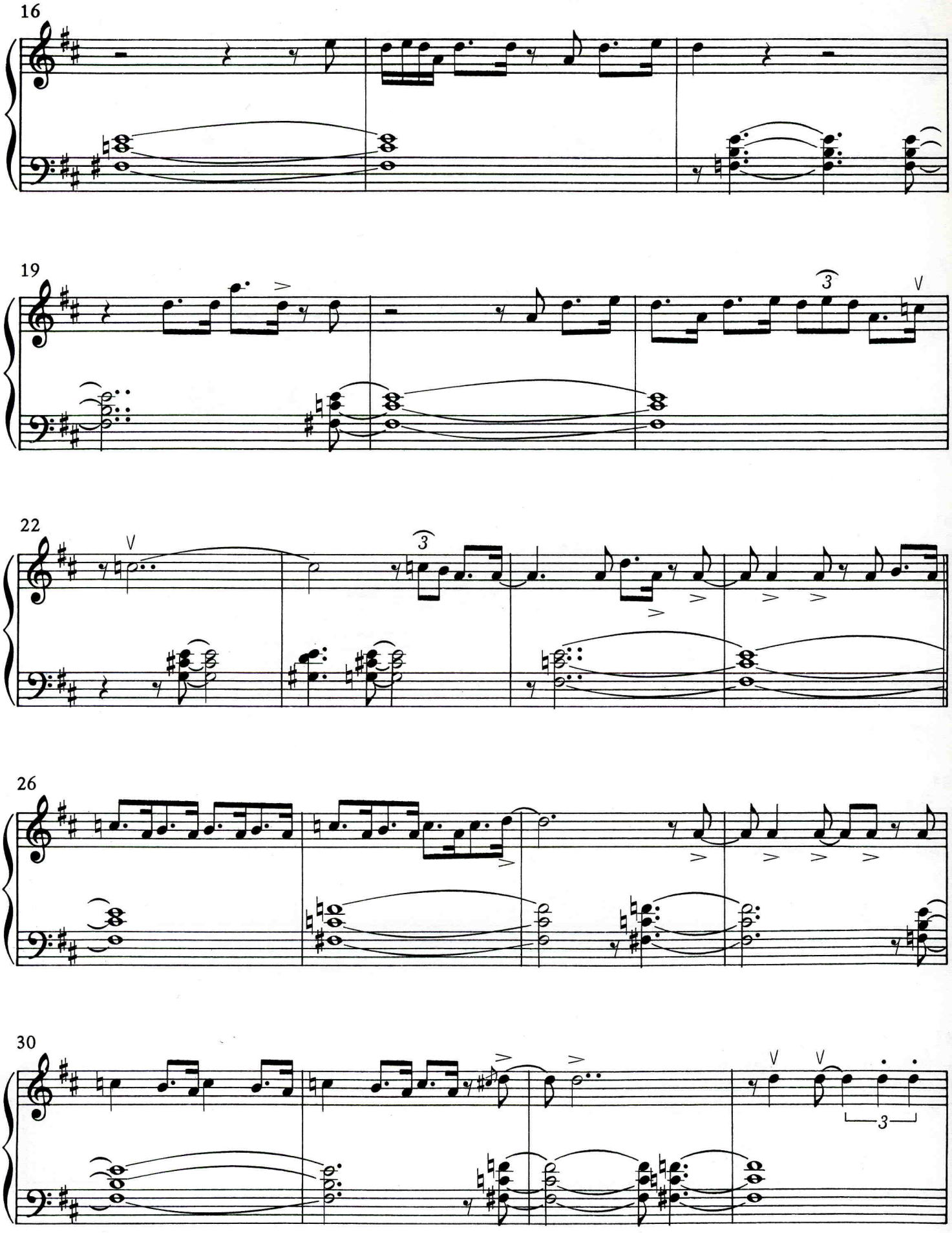
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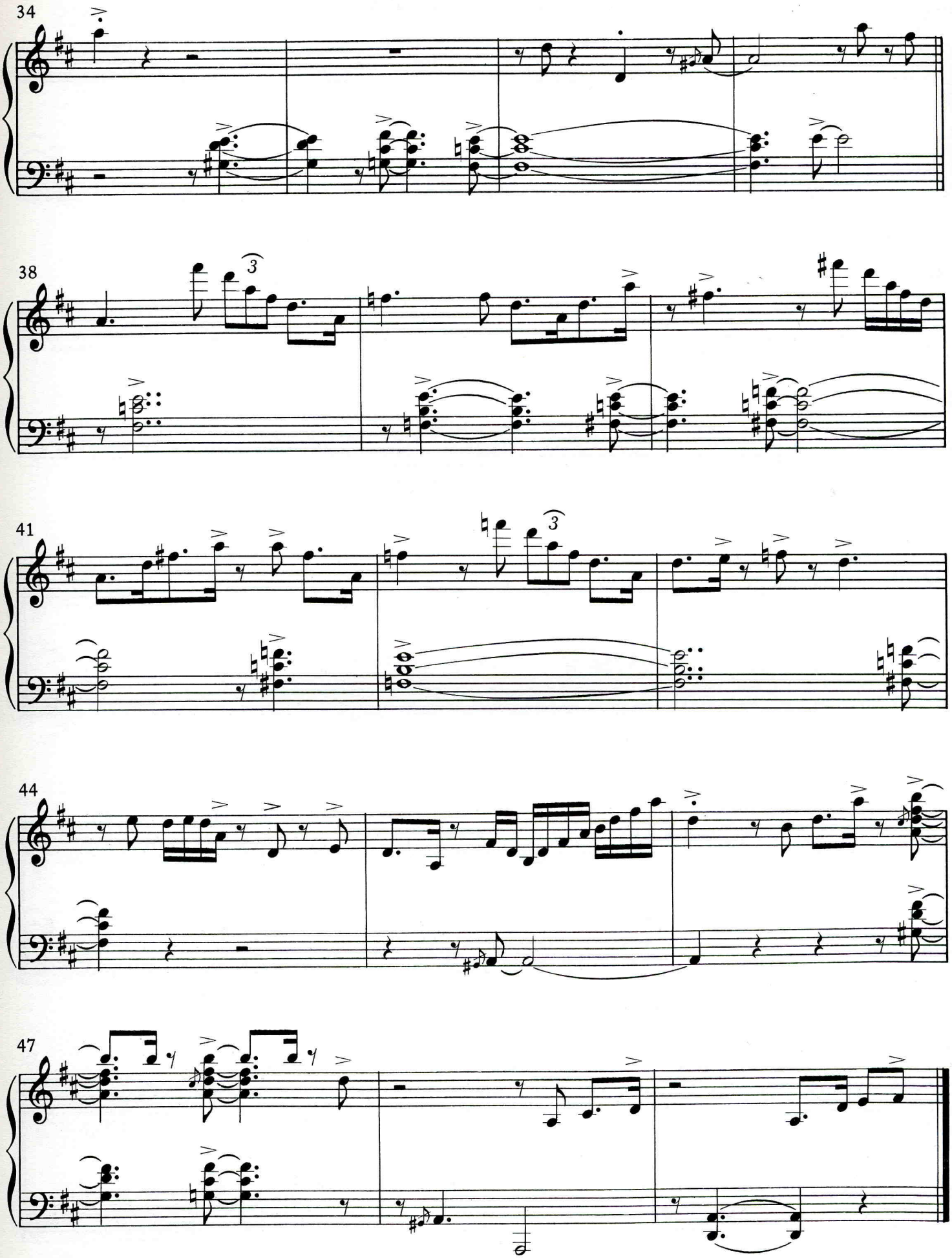
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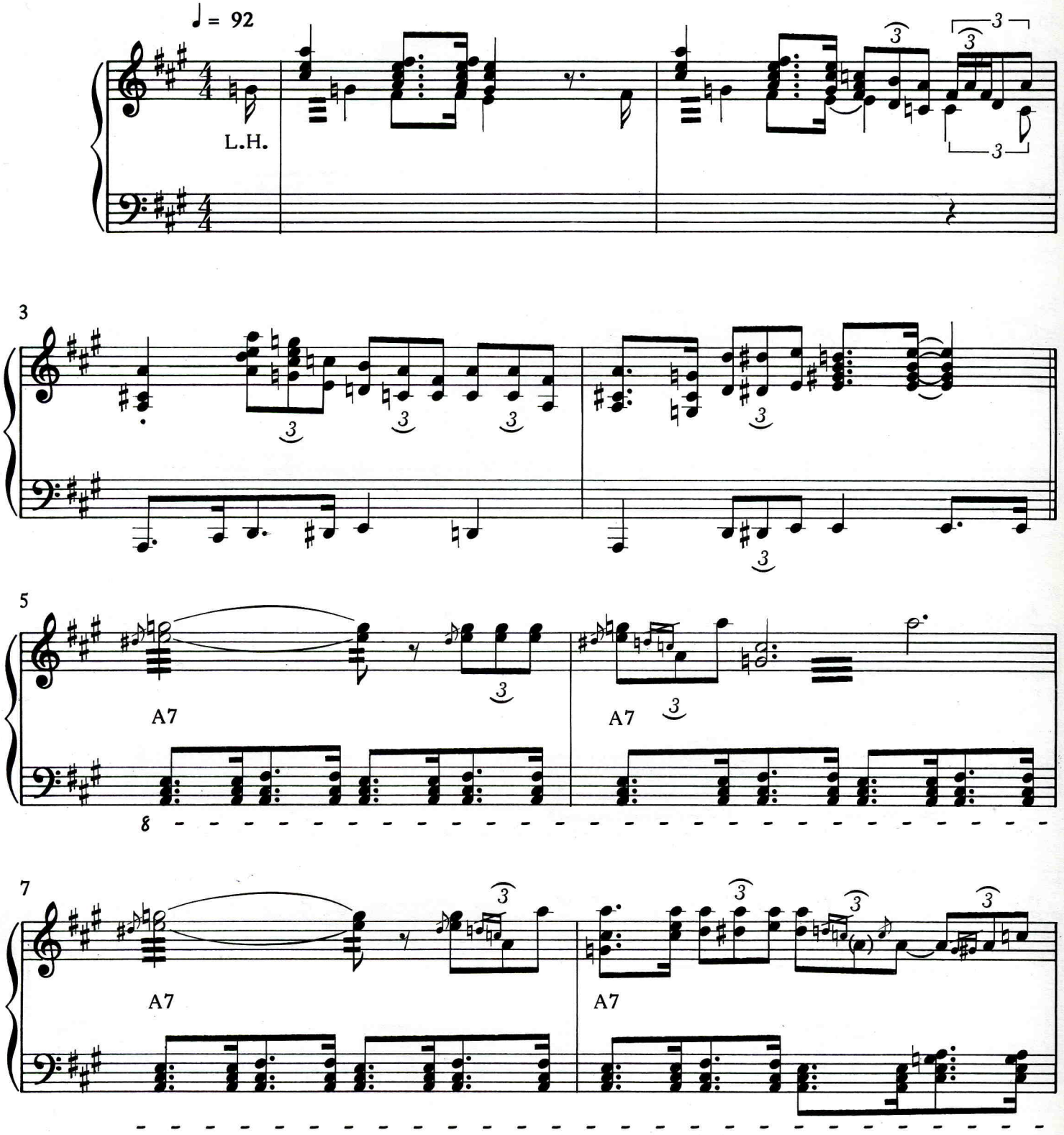
Otis Blues

by OTIS SPANN



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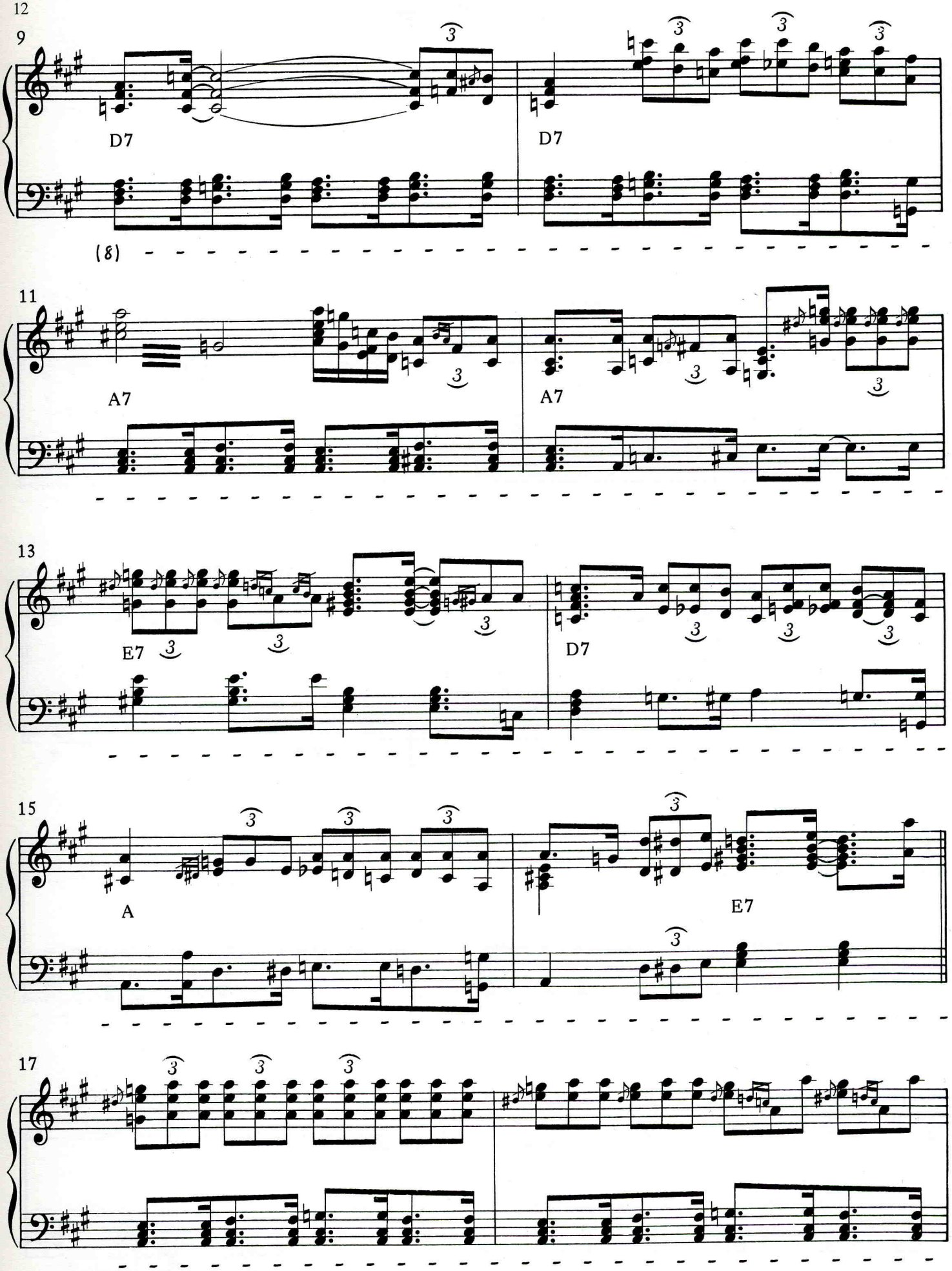
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D7
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A7
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E7
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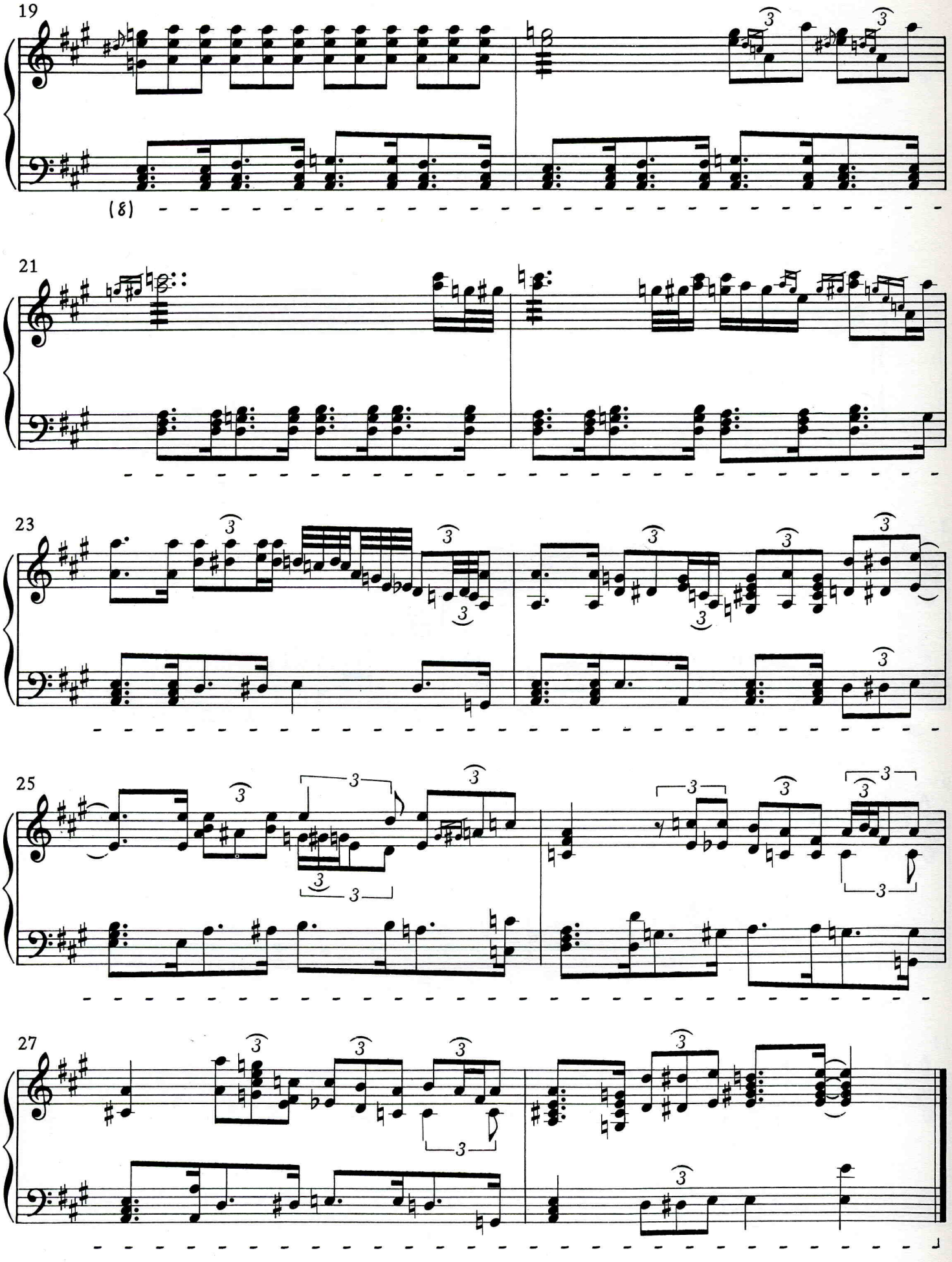
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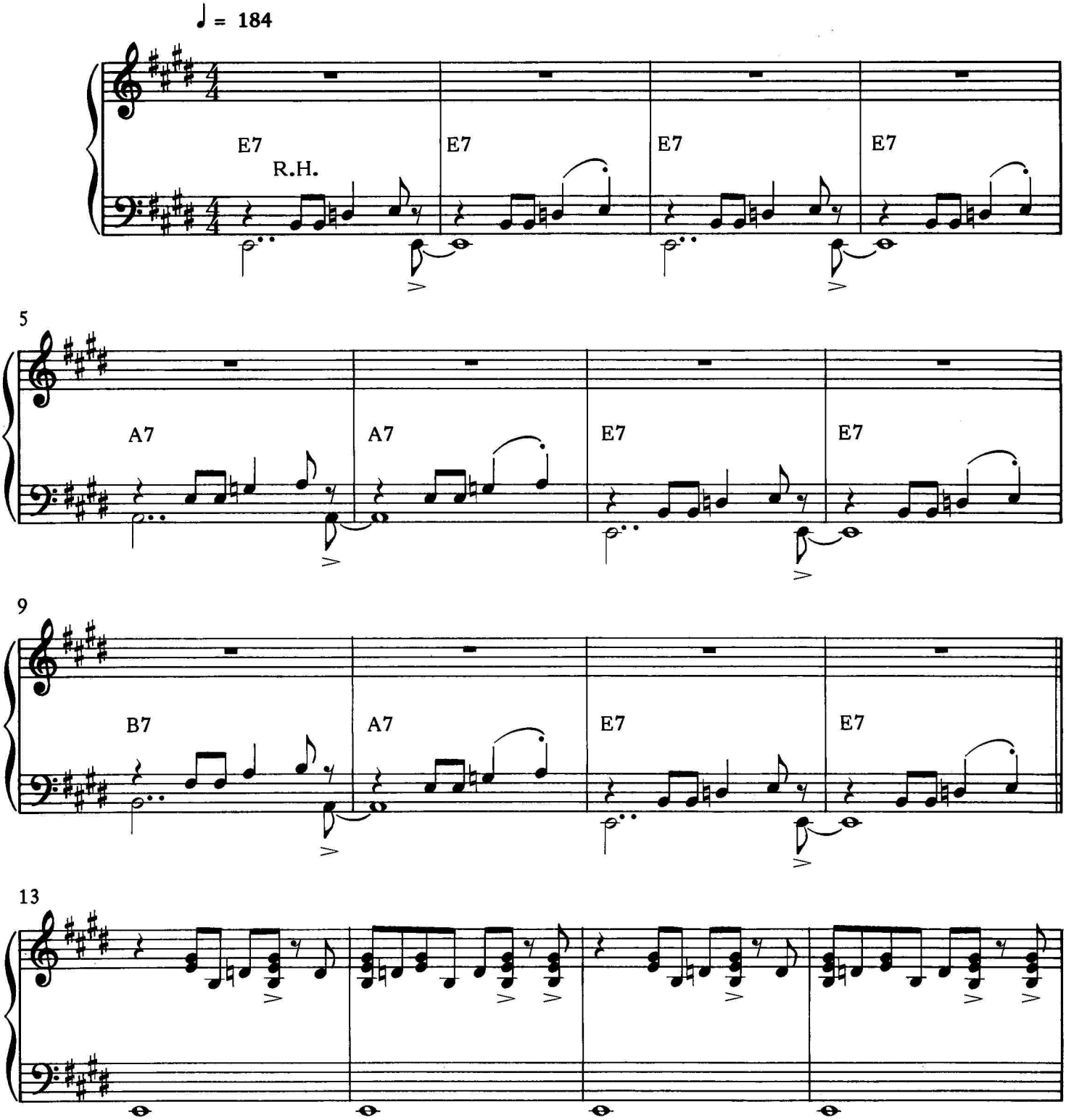
What'd I Say

by RAY CHARLES



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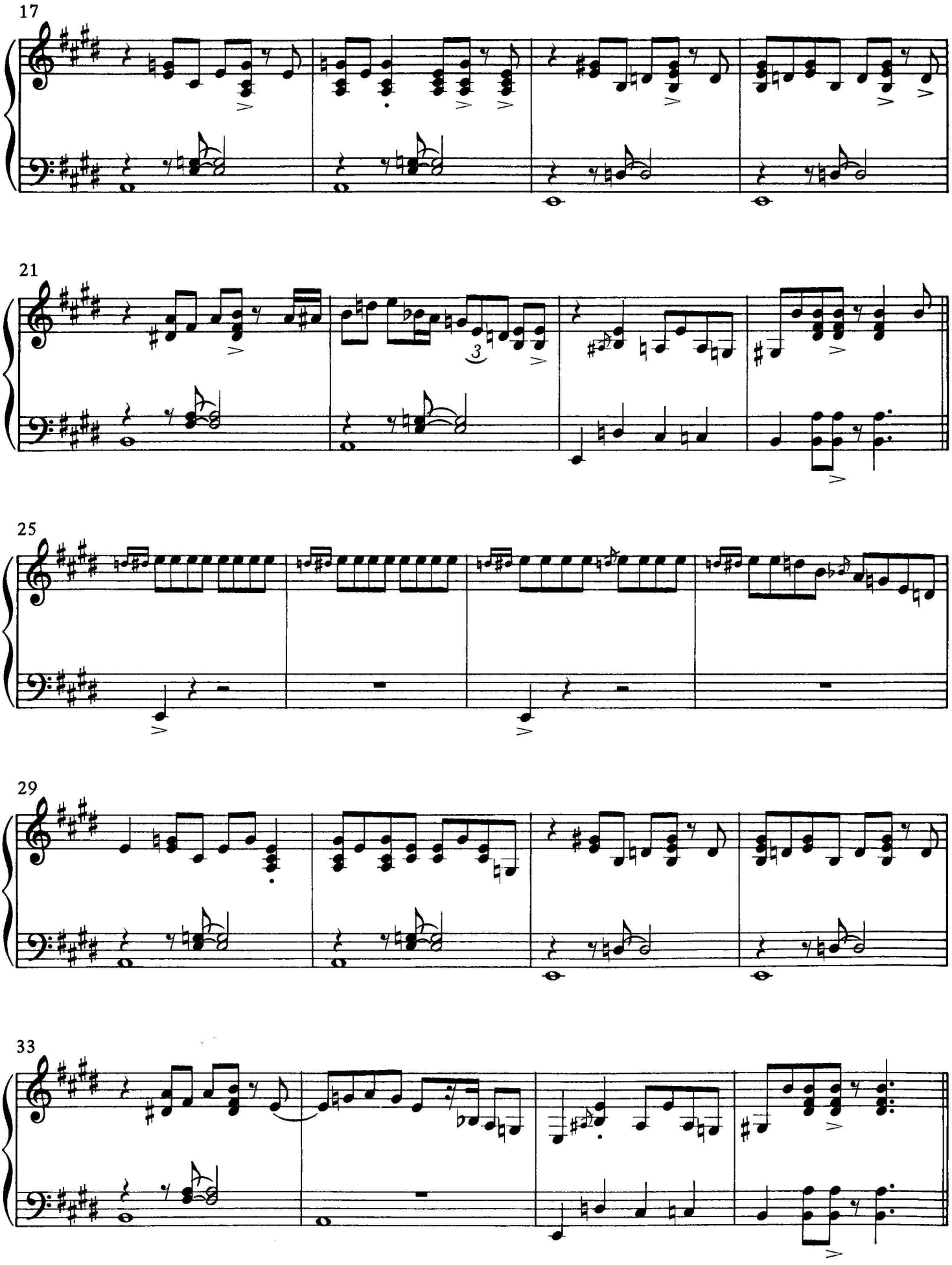
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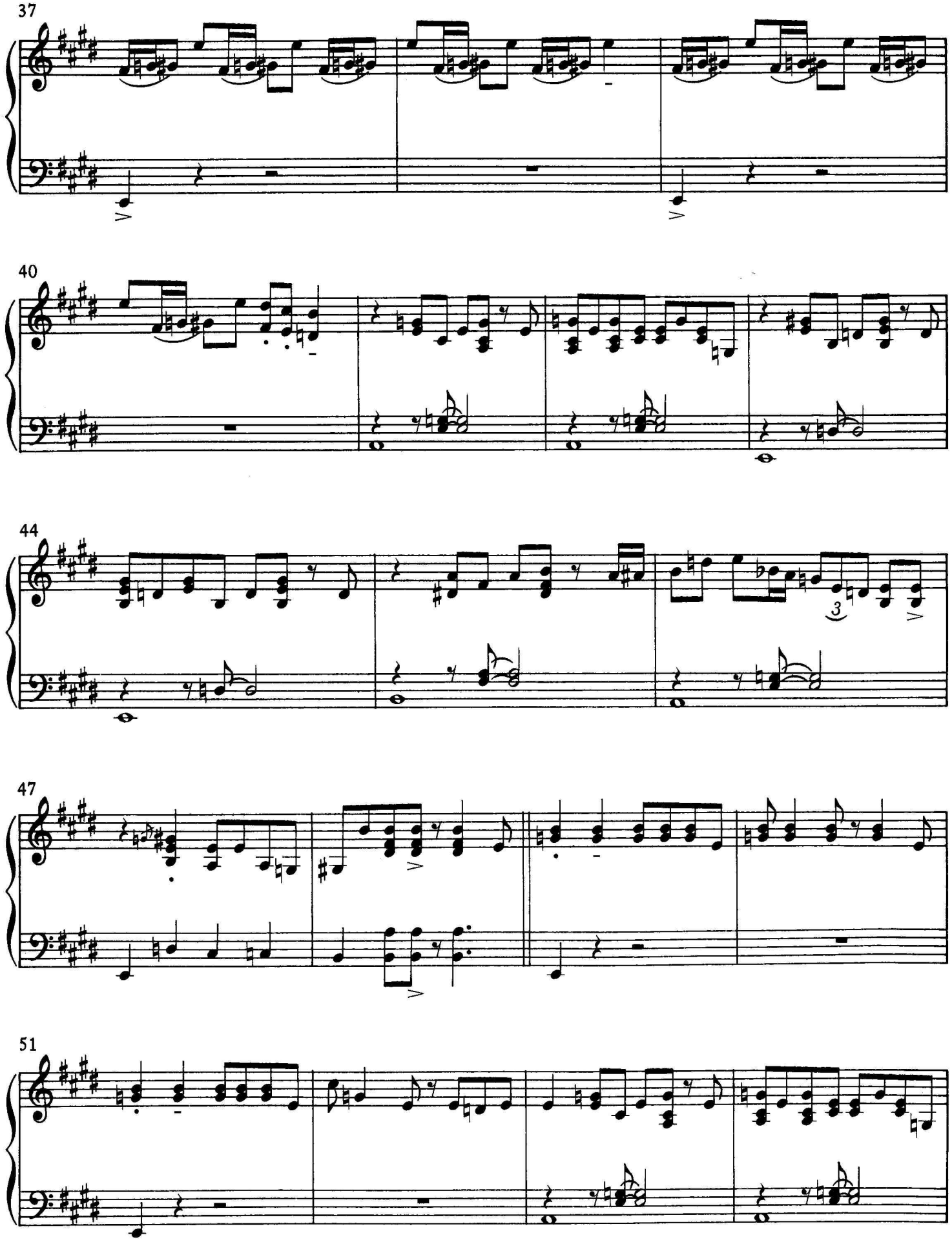
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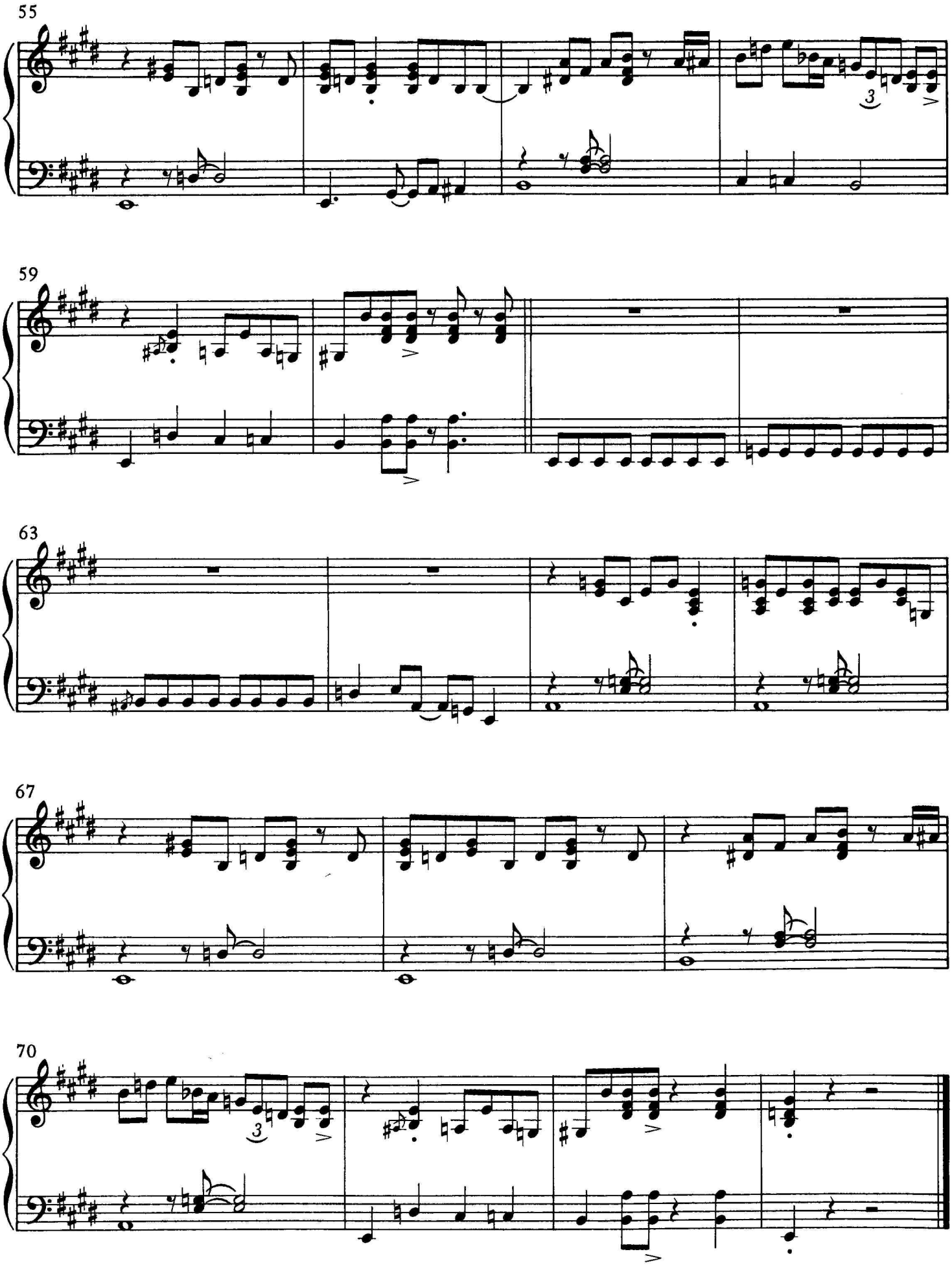
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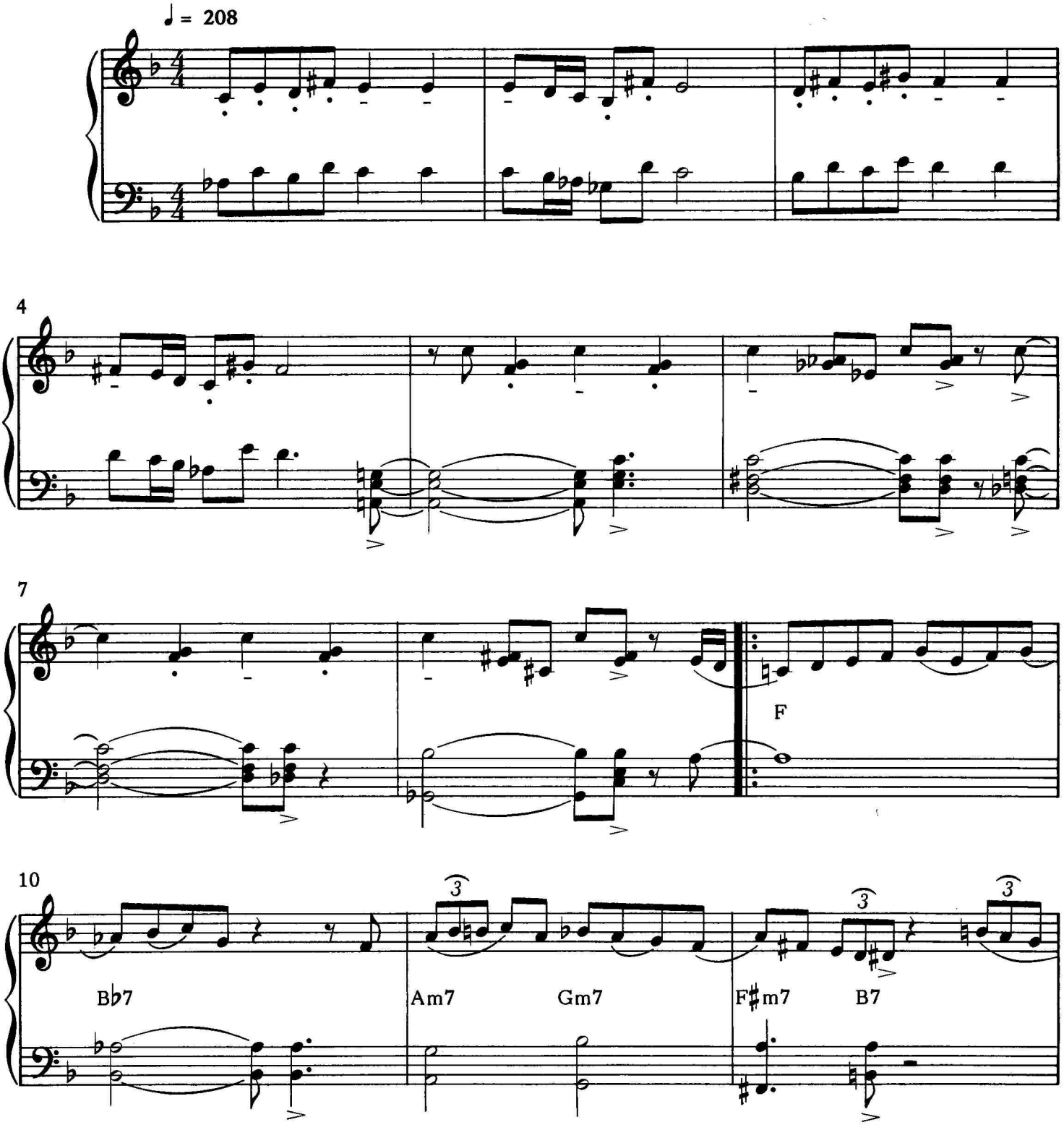
Dance Of The Infidels

by BUD POWELL



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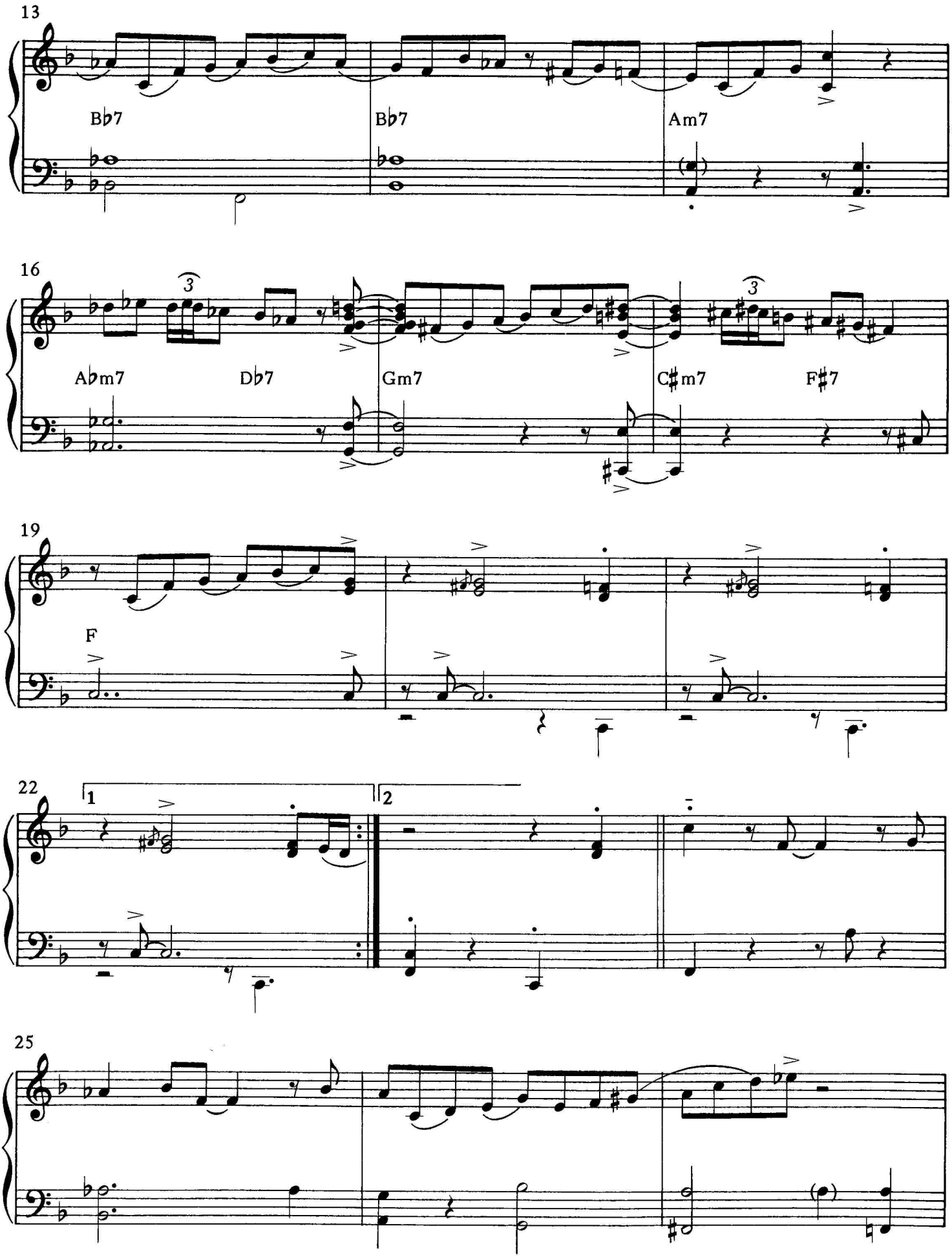
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B♭7
B♭7
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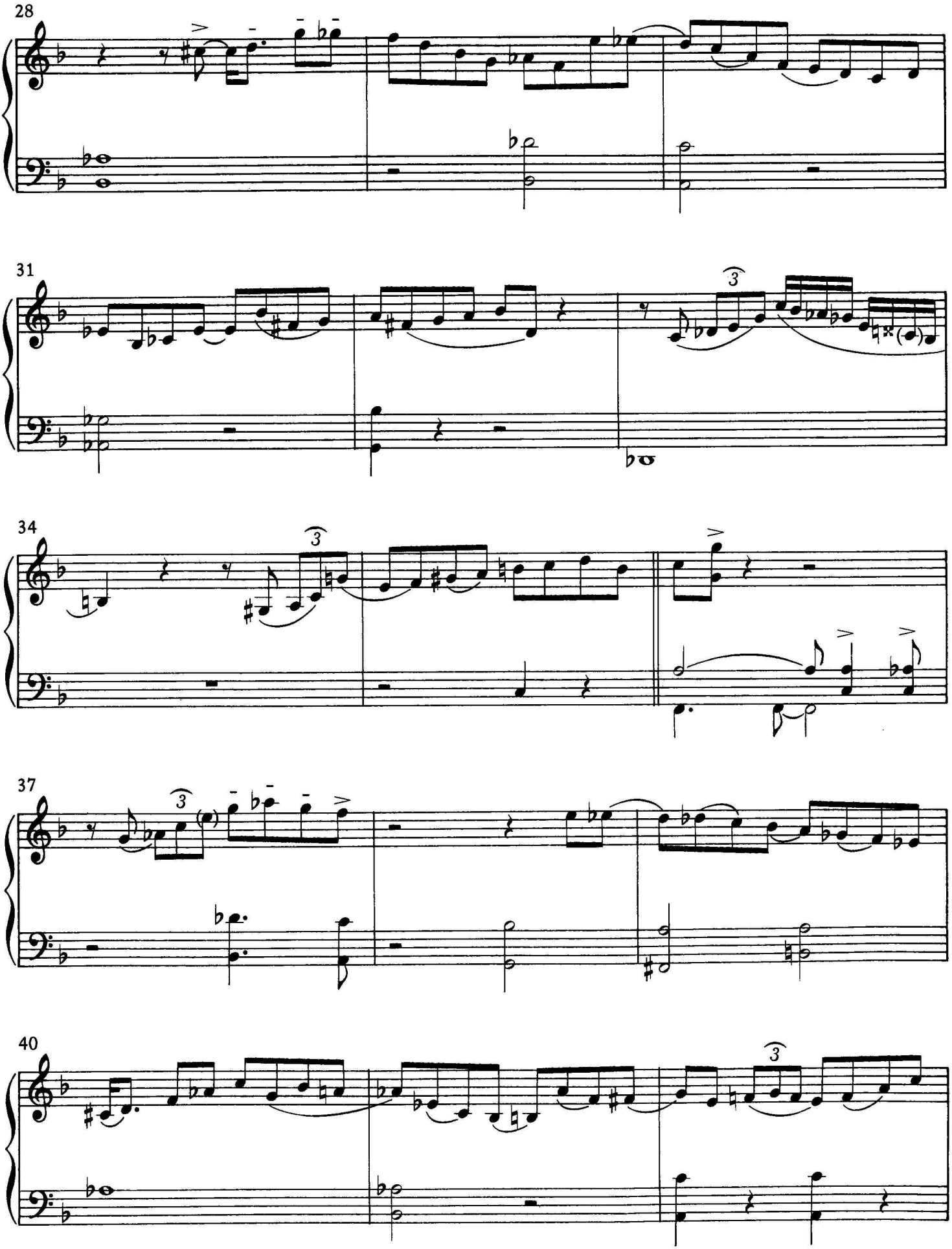
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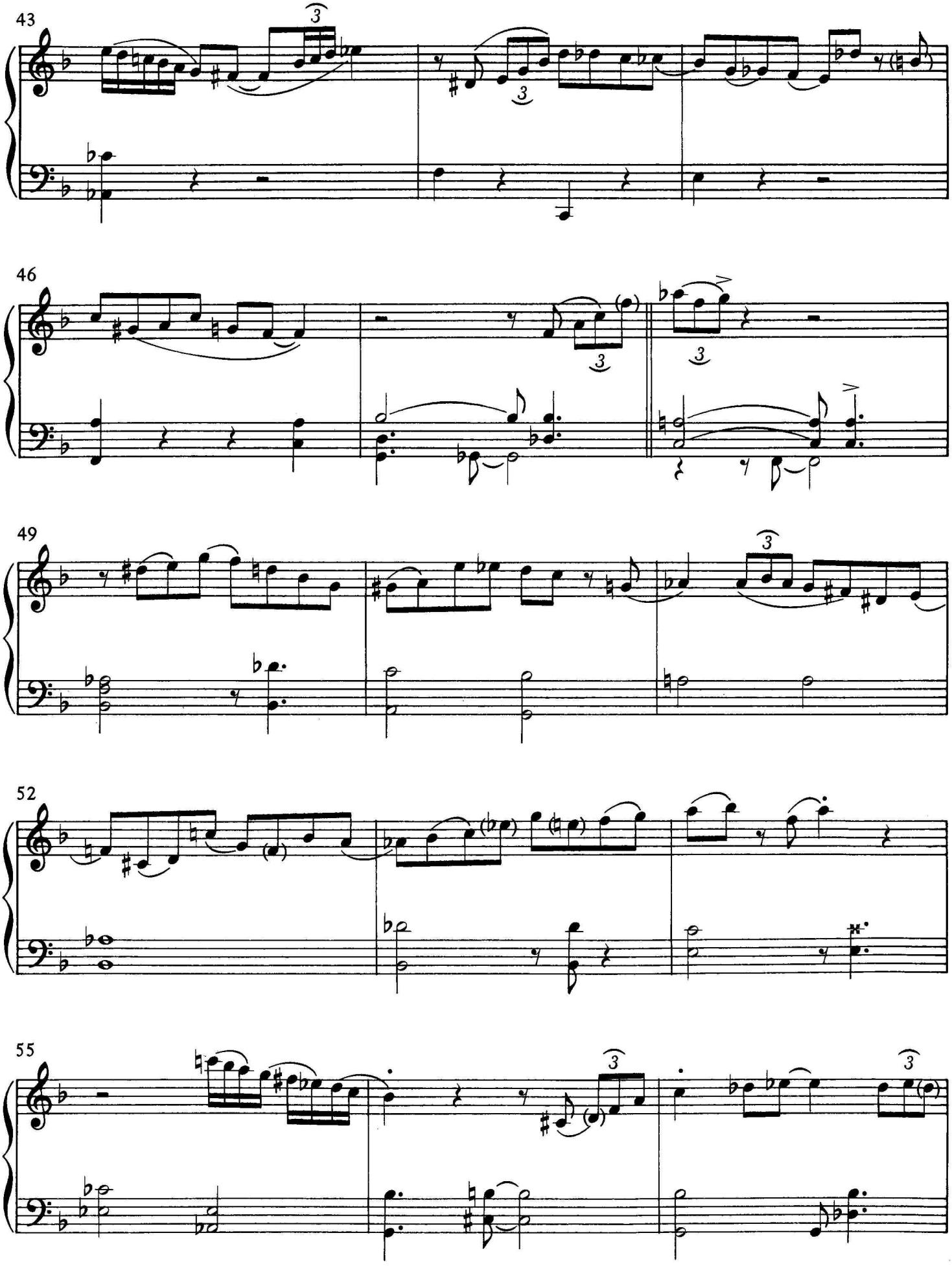
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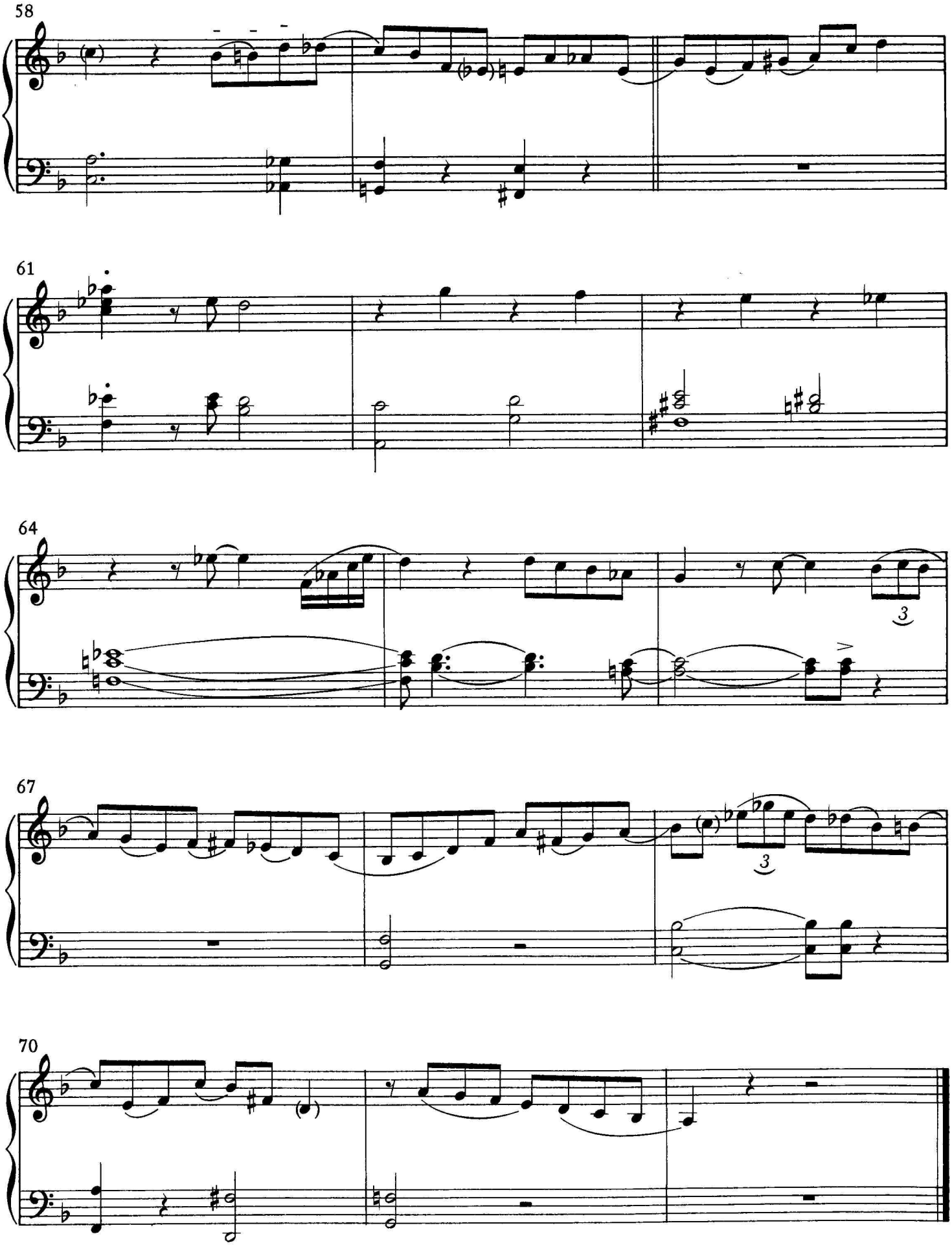
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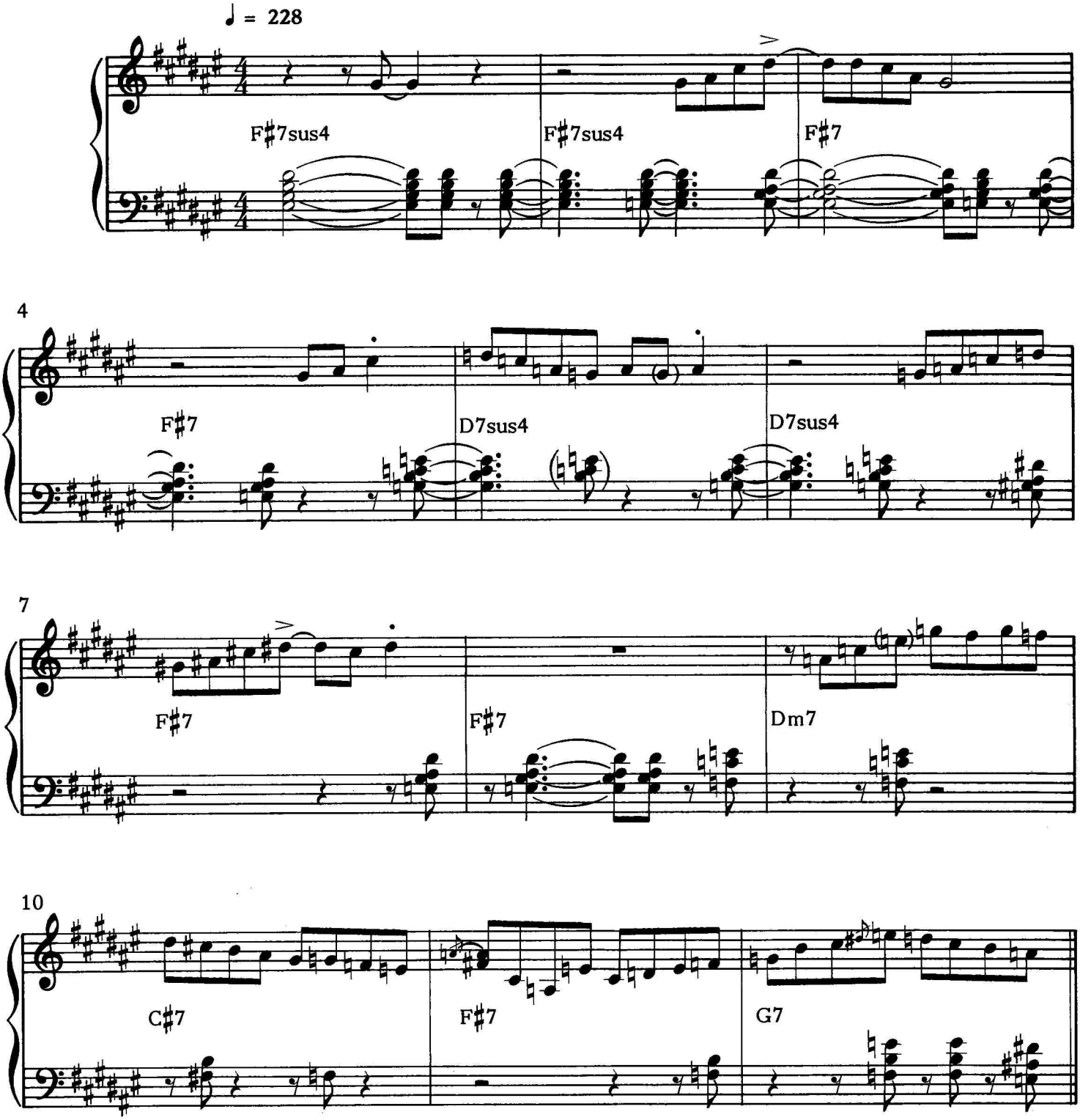
For Spee's Sake

by FREDDIE HUBBARD



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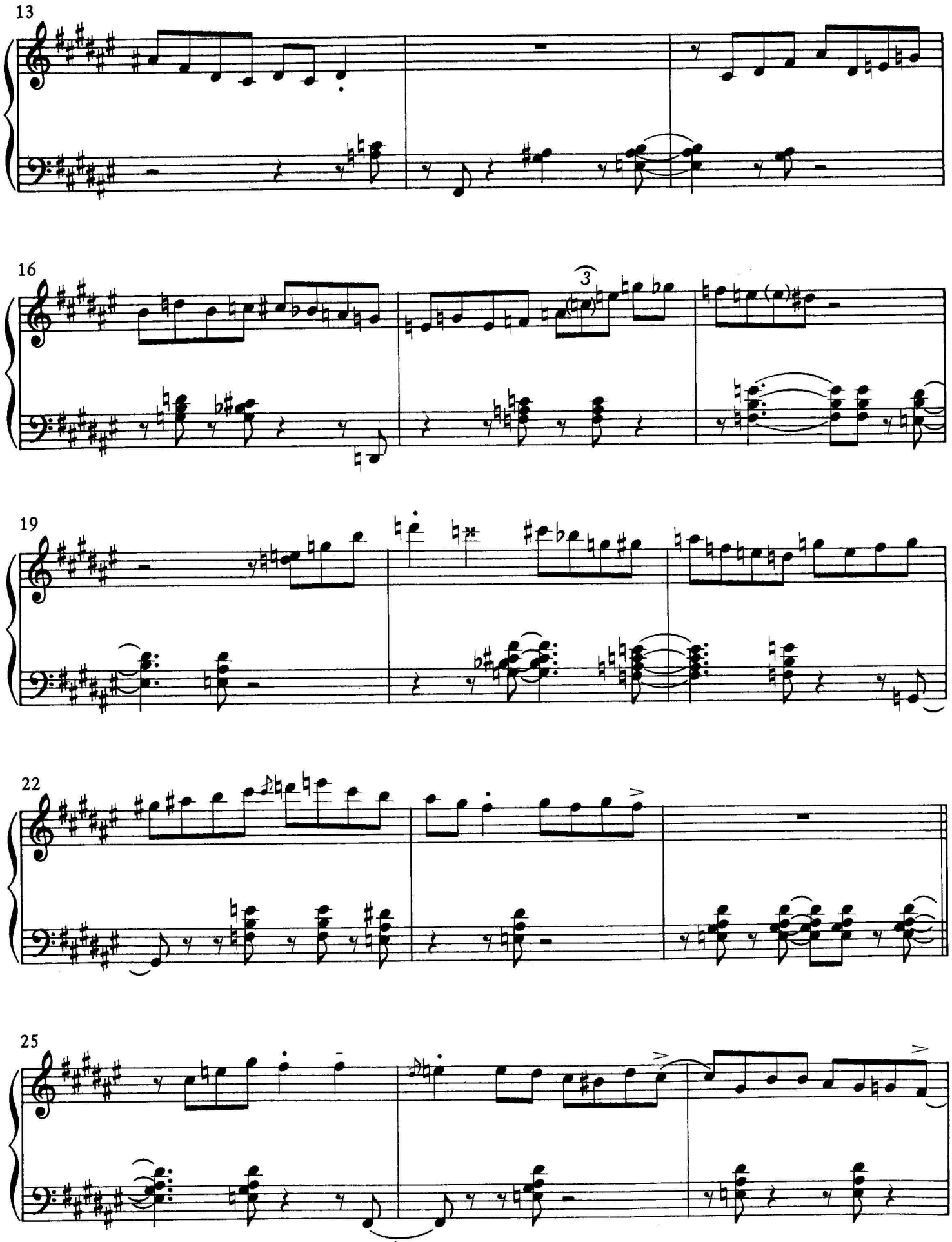
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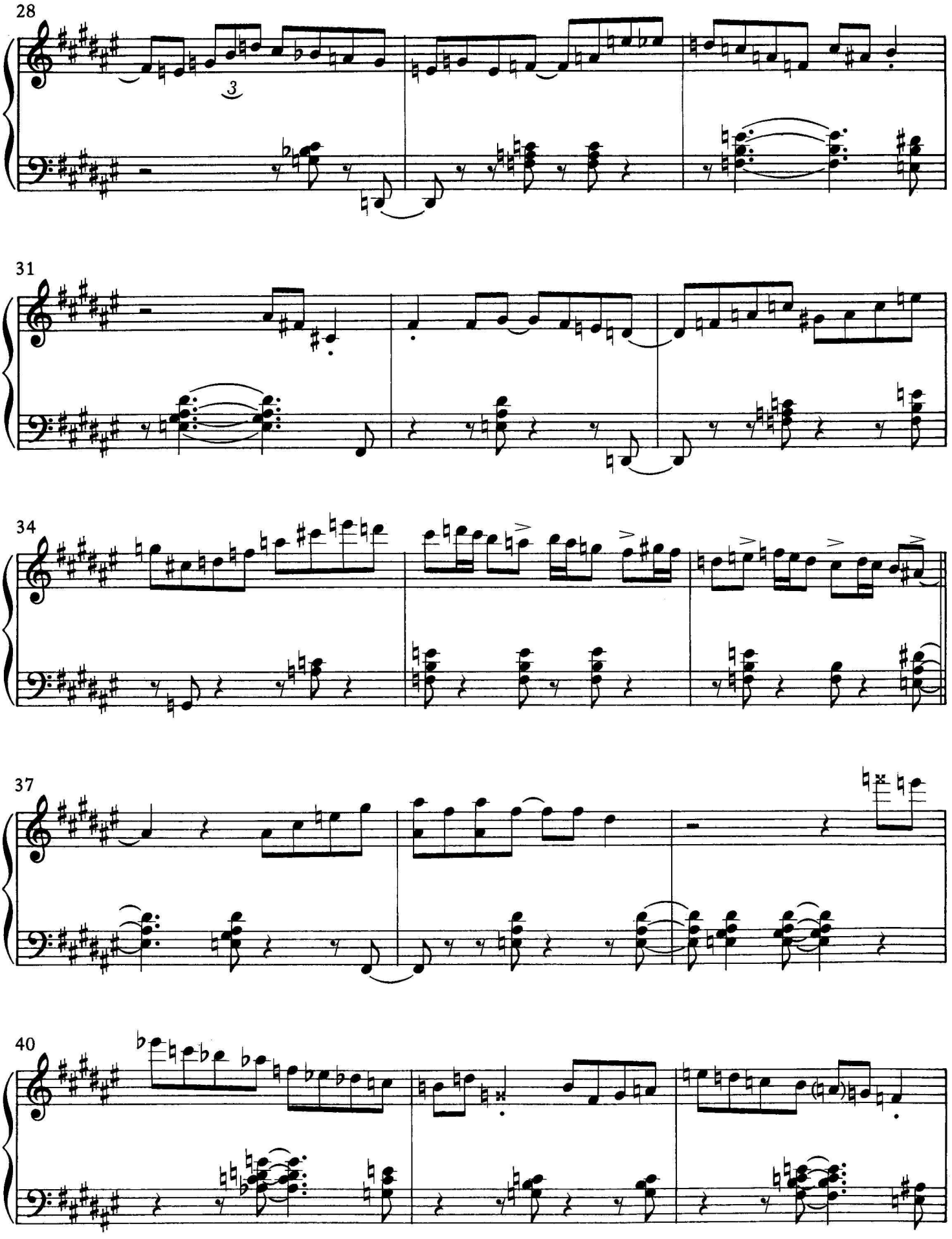
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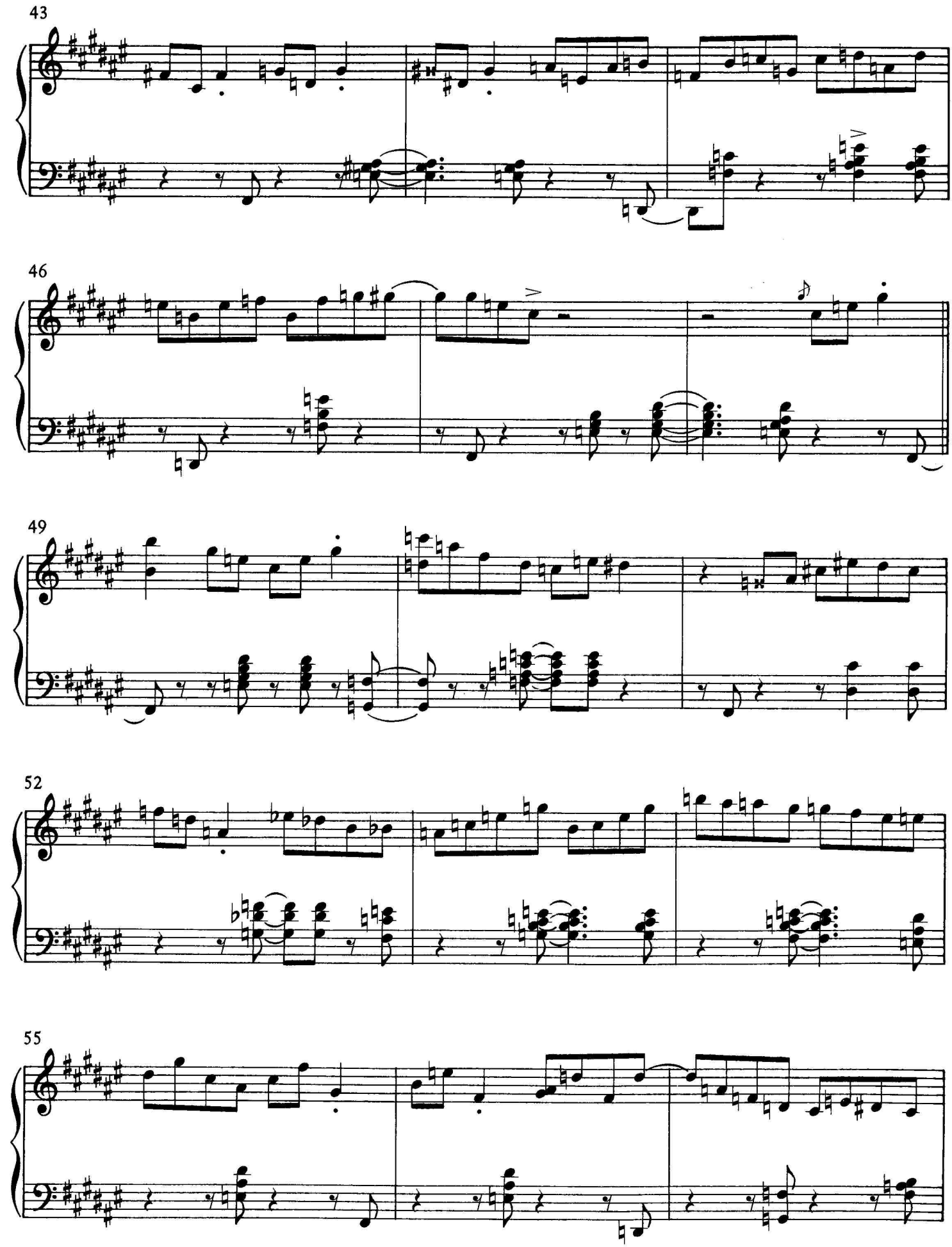
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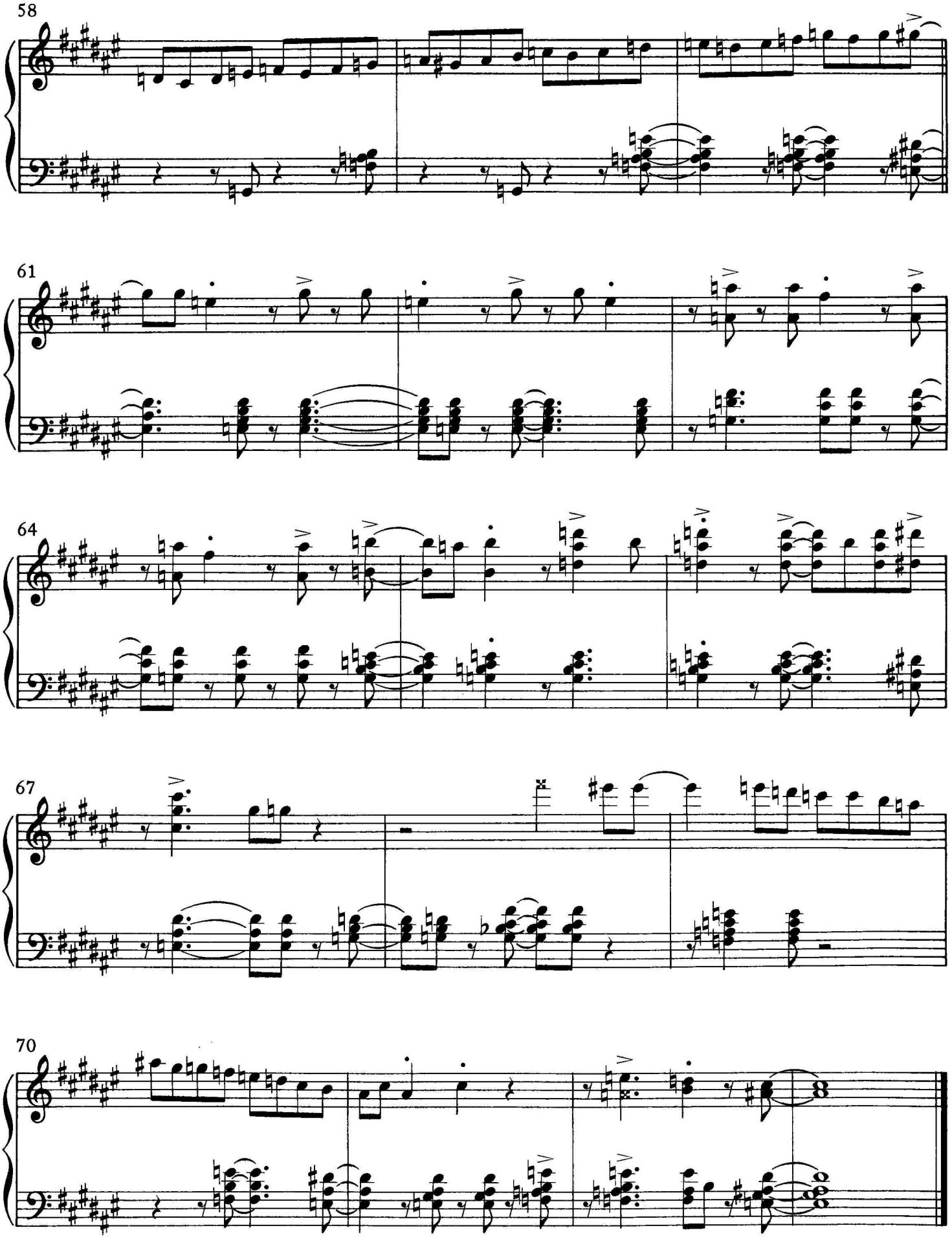
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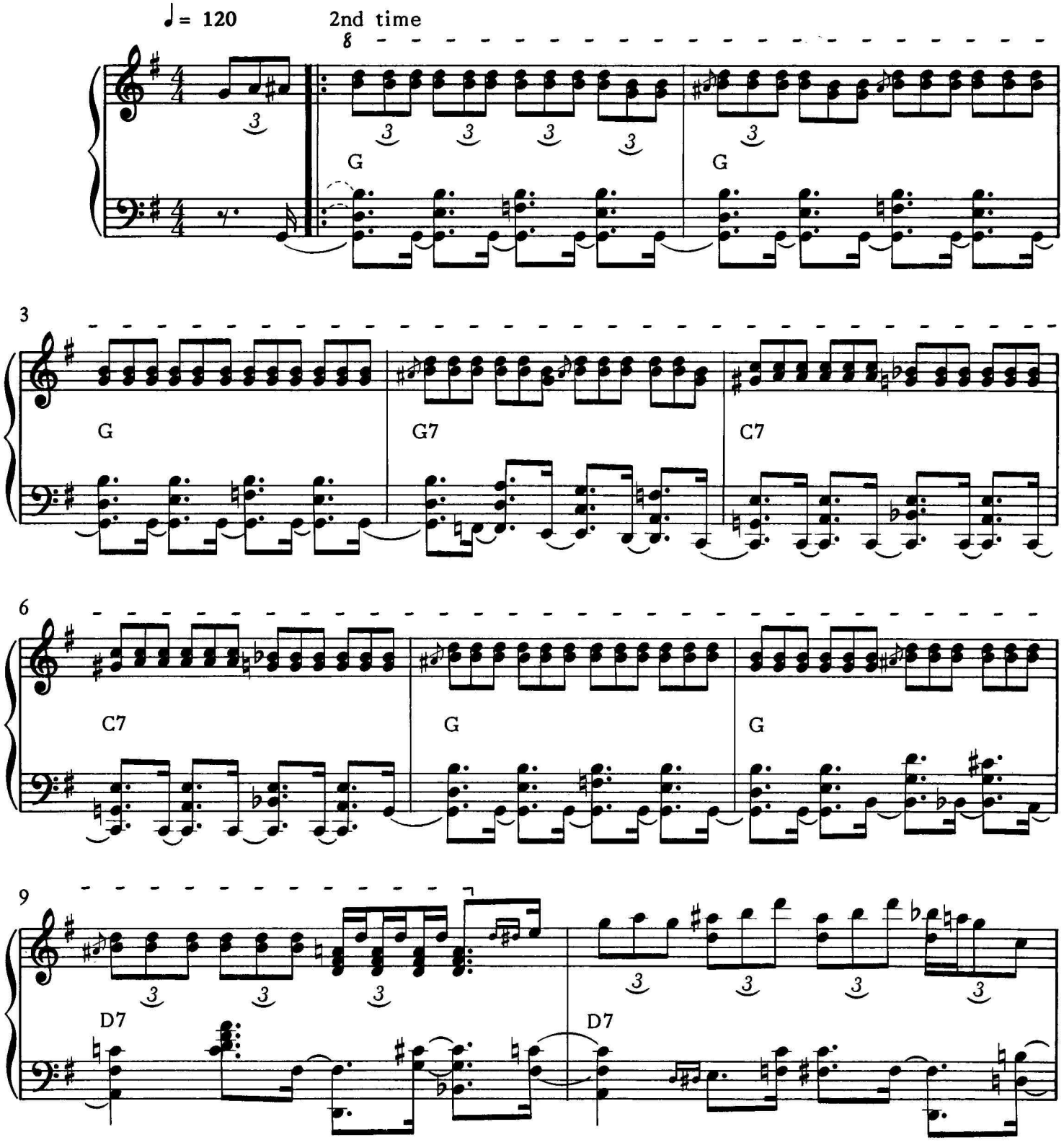
Suitcase Blues

by H THOMAS



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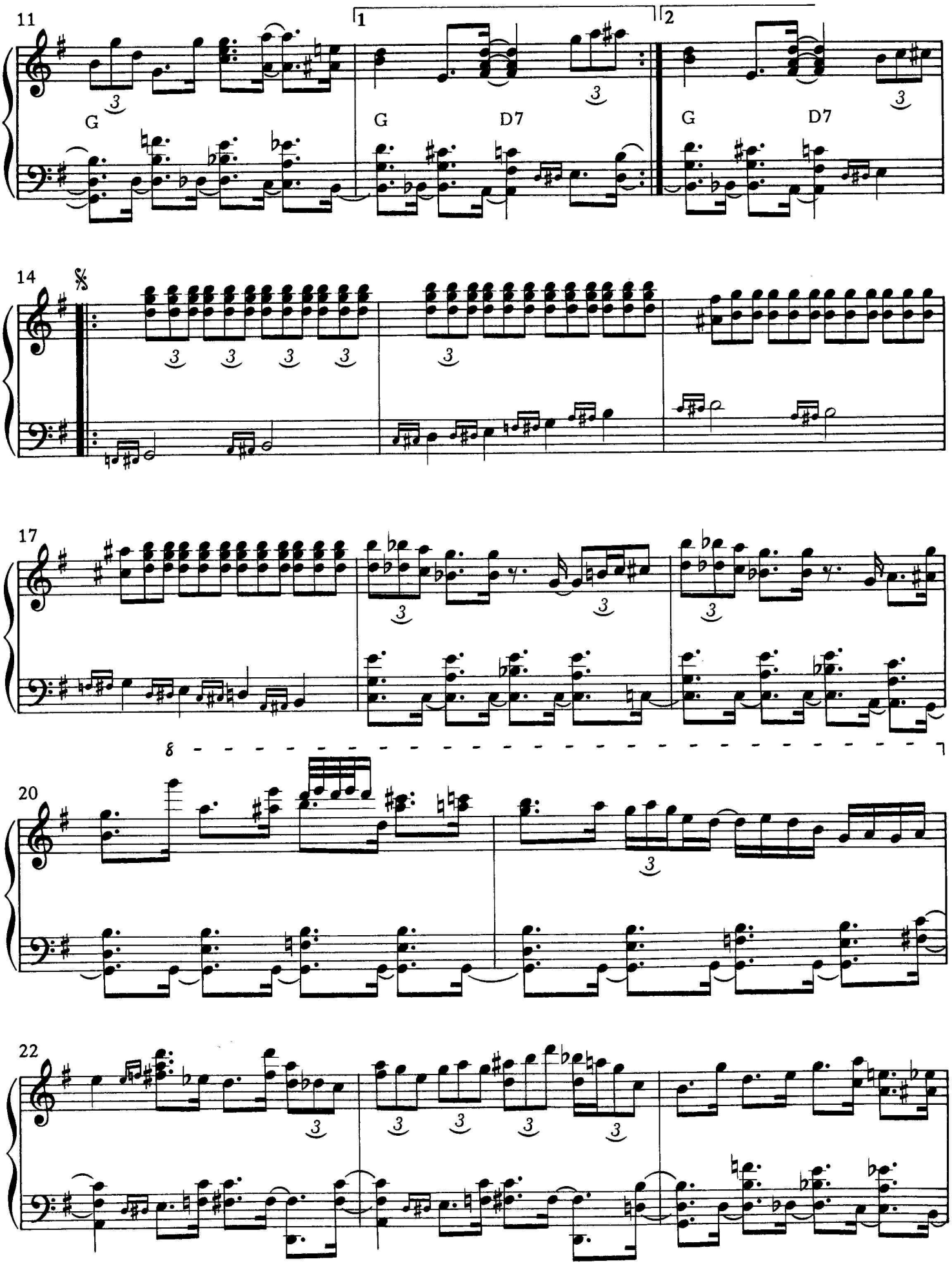
11
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G
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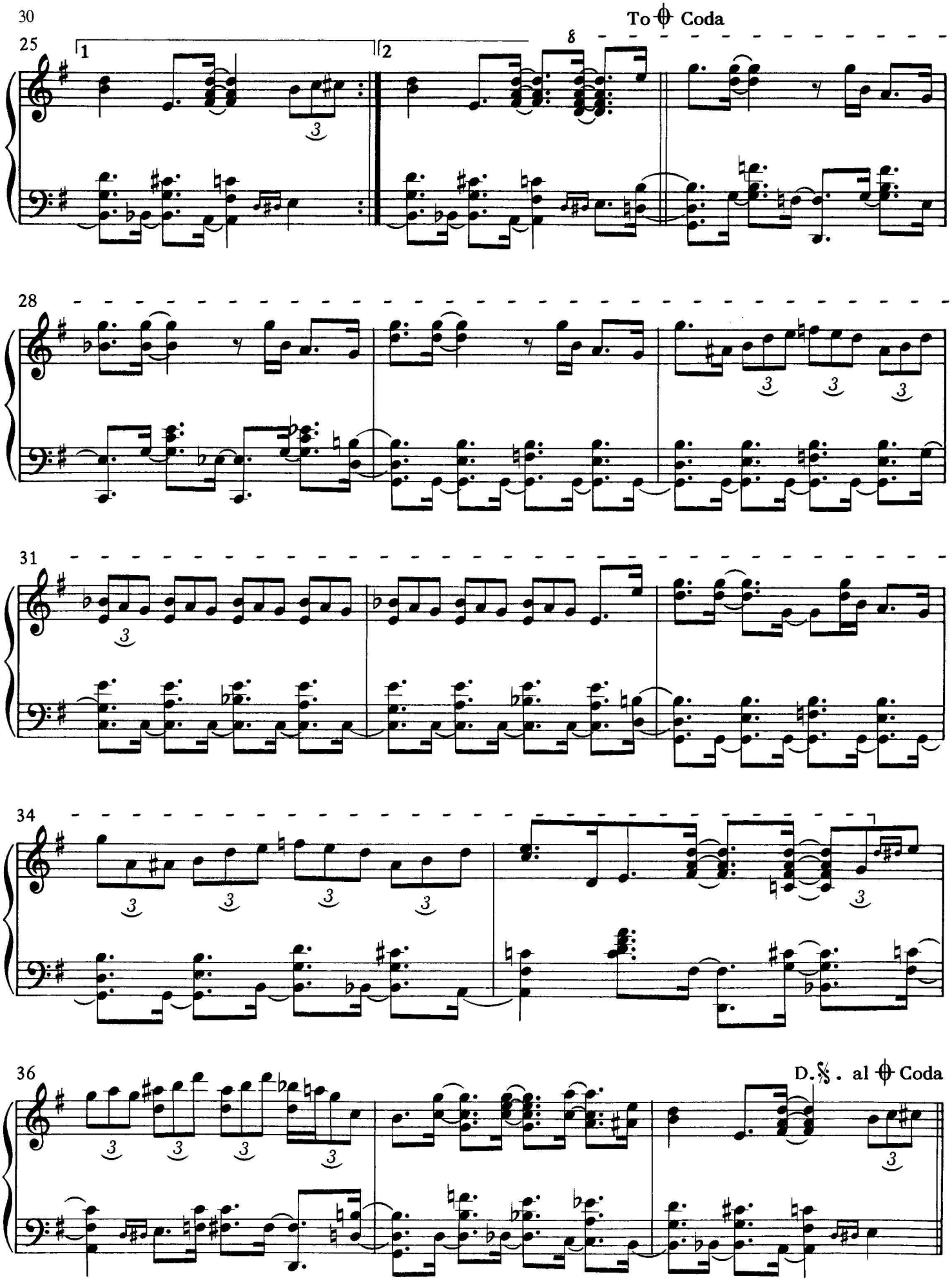
To Coda
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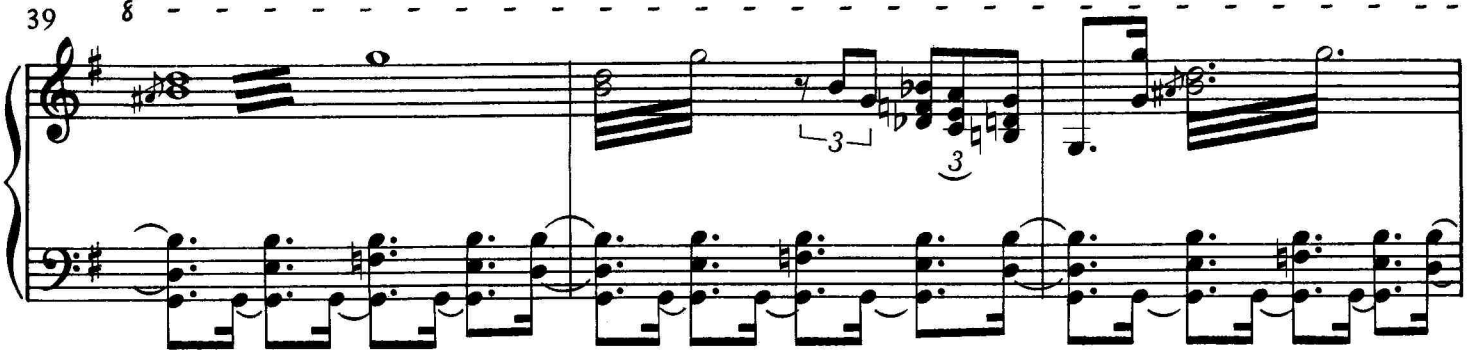
36
D.S. al Coda

CODA

39



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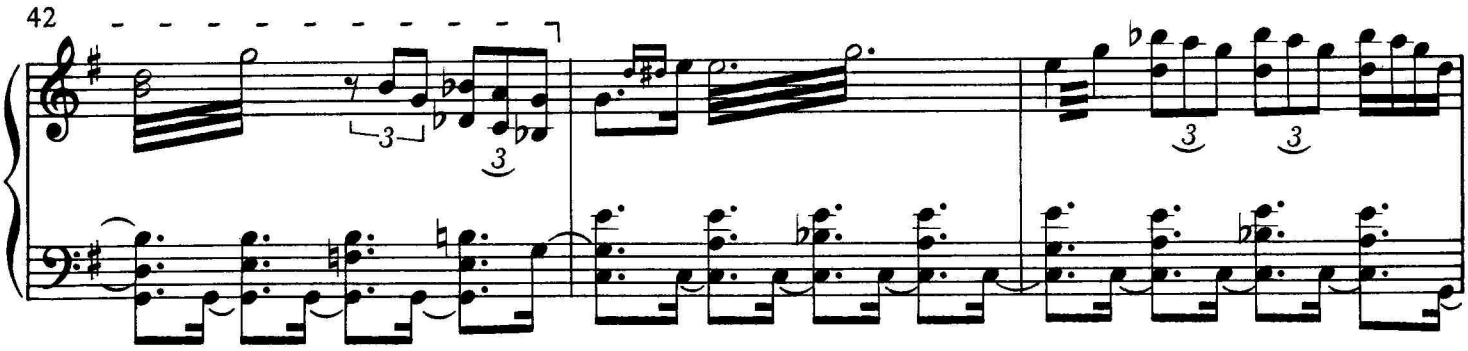

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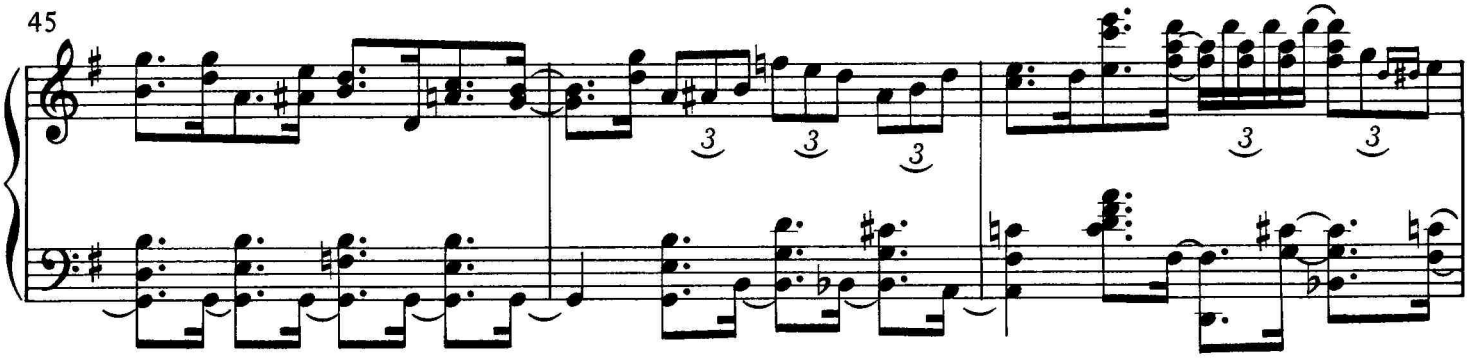

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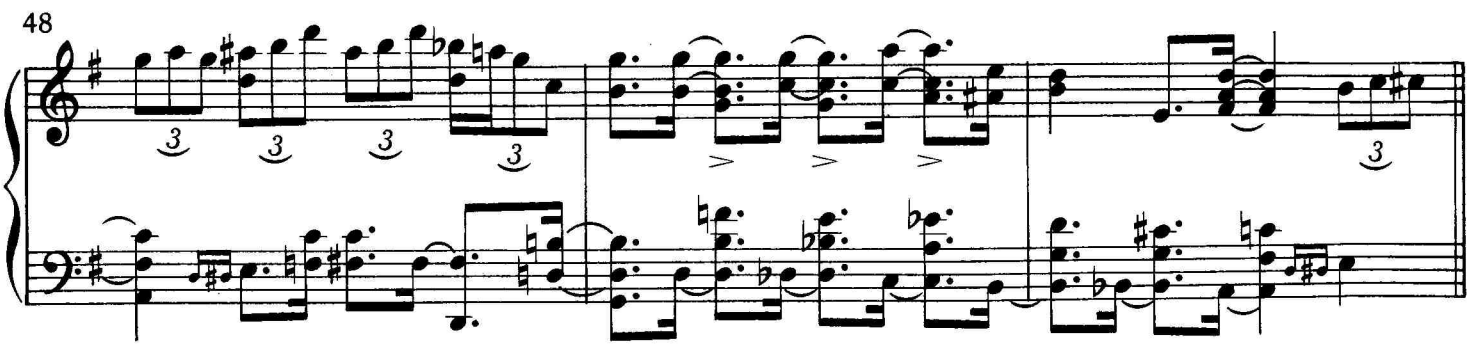

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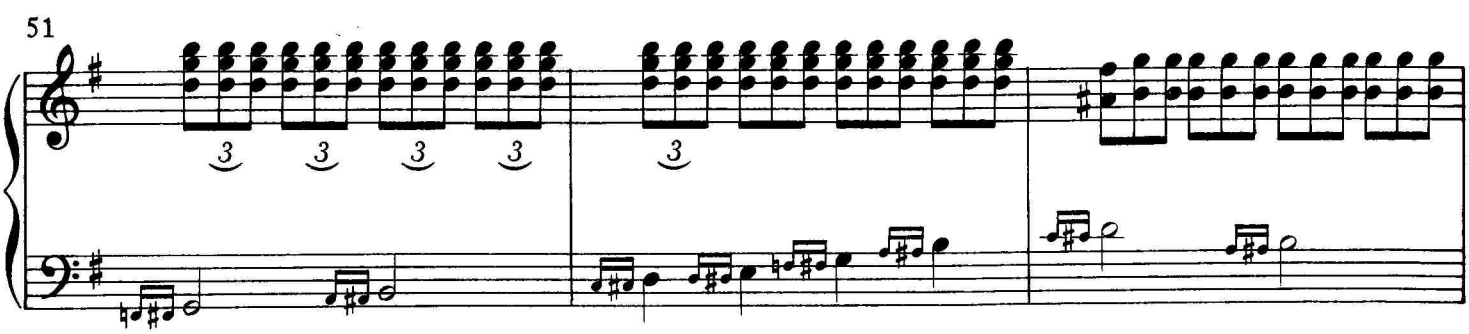

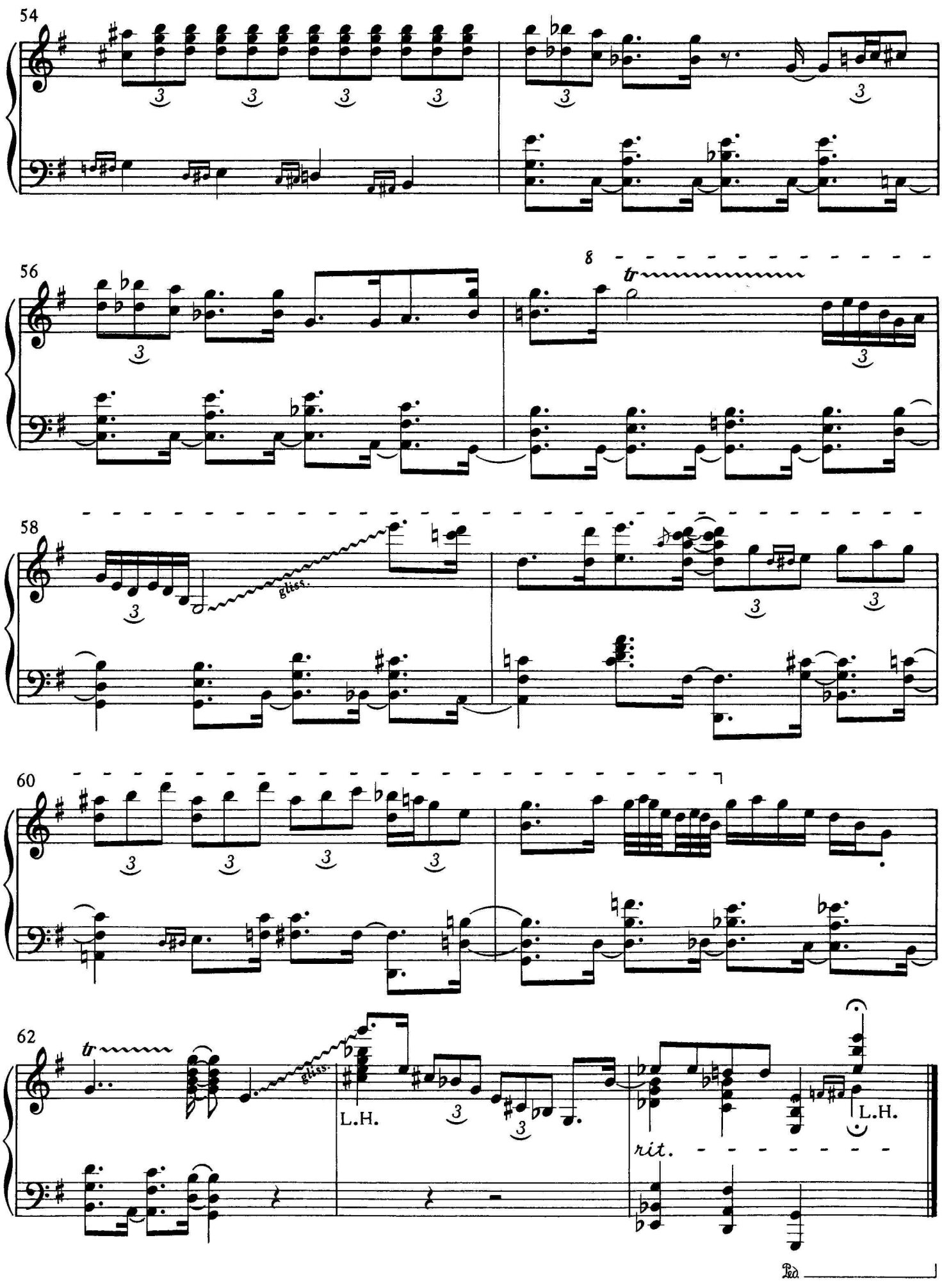
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gliss.
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gliss.
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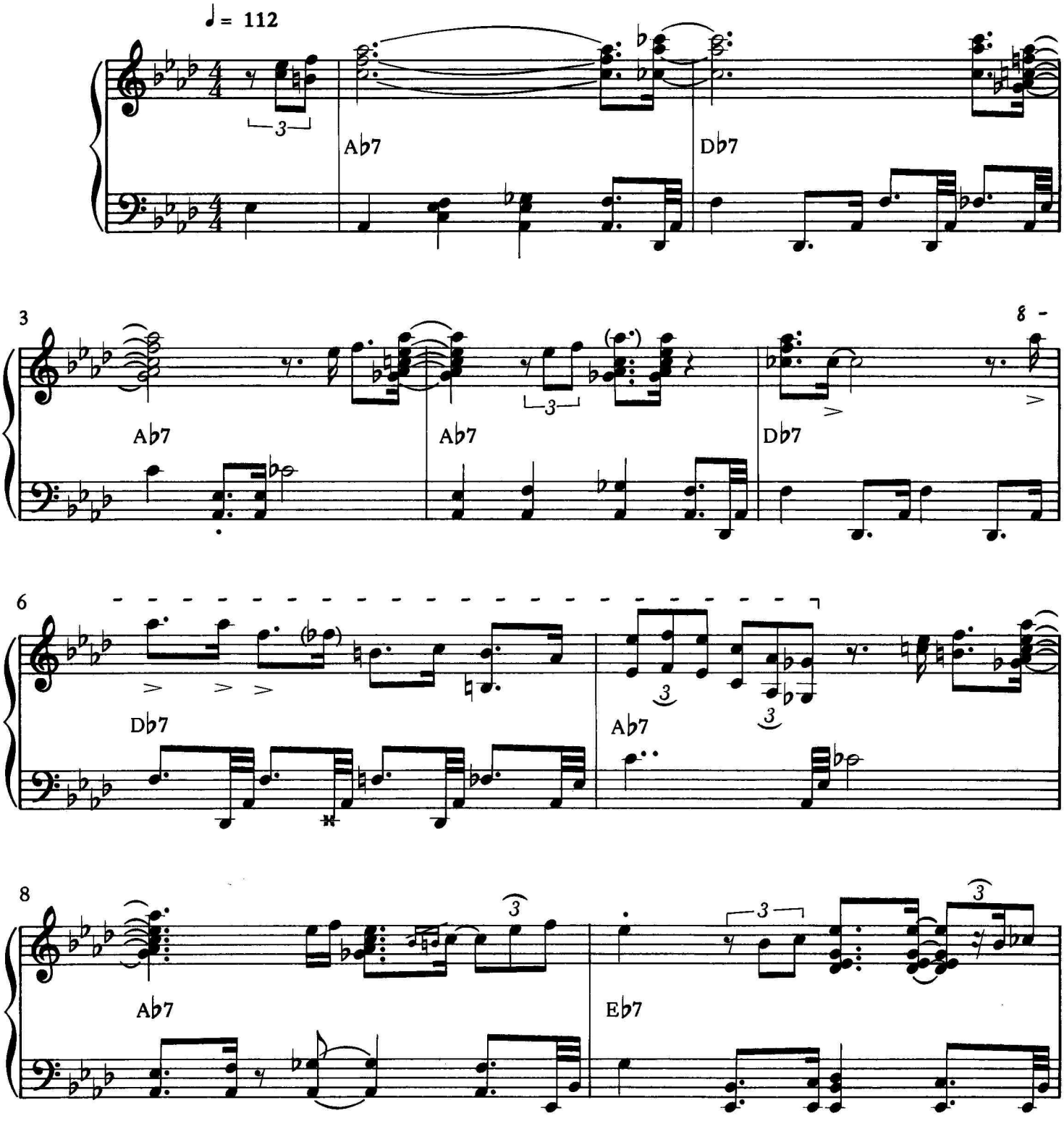
Crying In My Sleep

by JIMMY YANCEY



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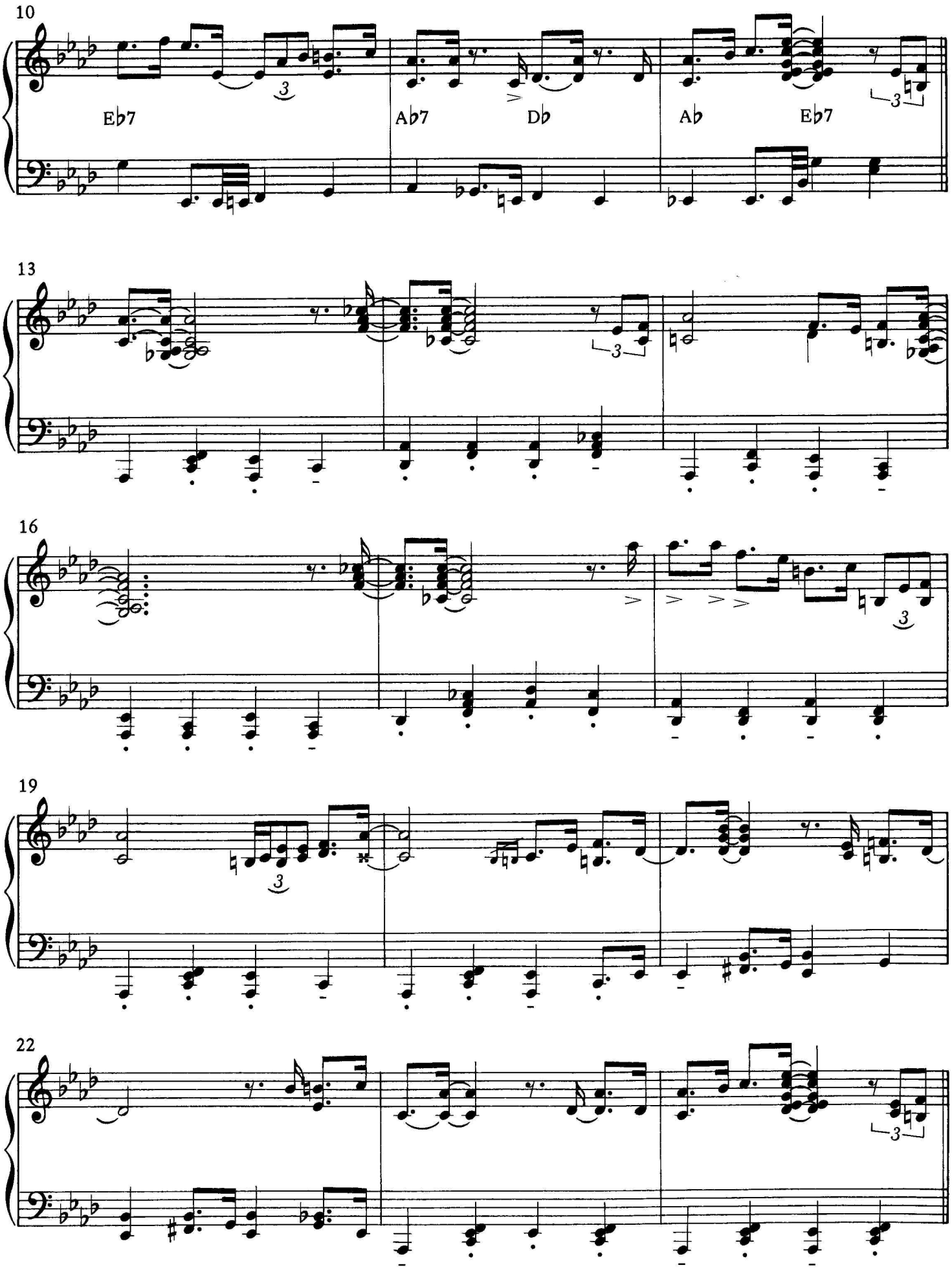
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Eb7
Ab7
Db
Ab
Eb7
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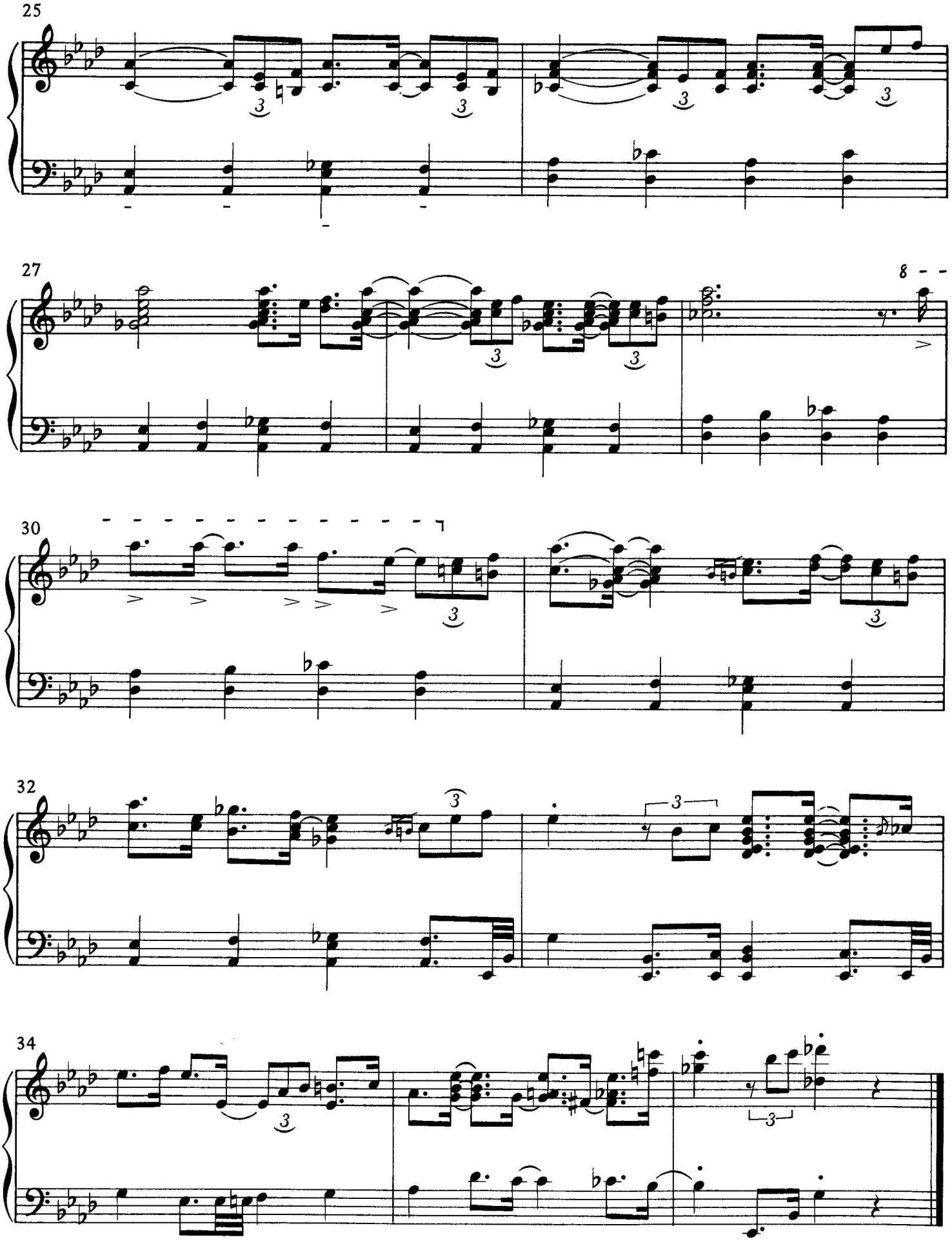
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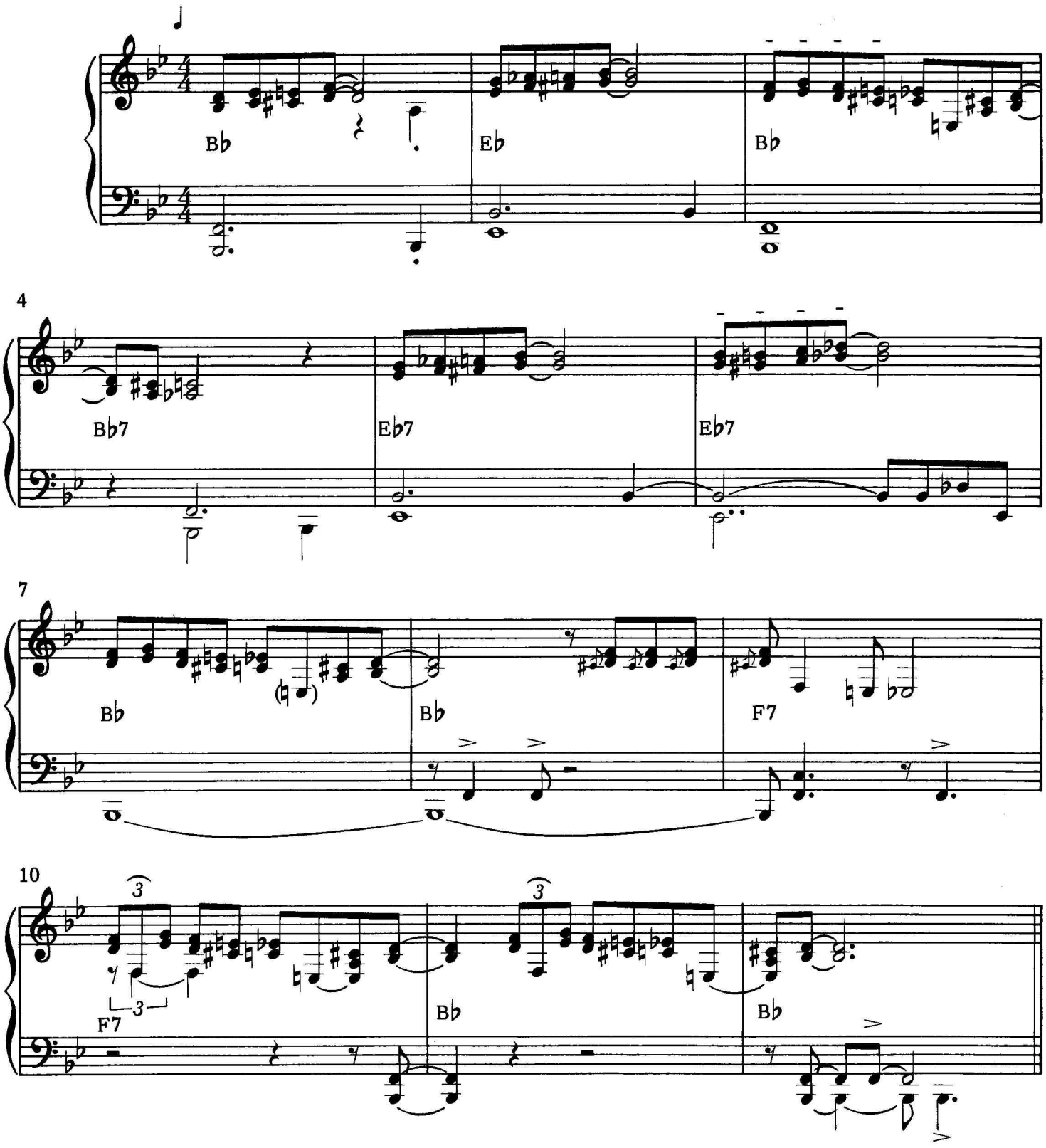
Blue Monk

by THELONIOUS MONK



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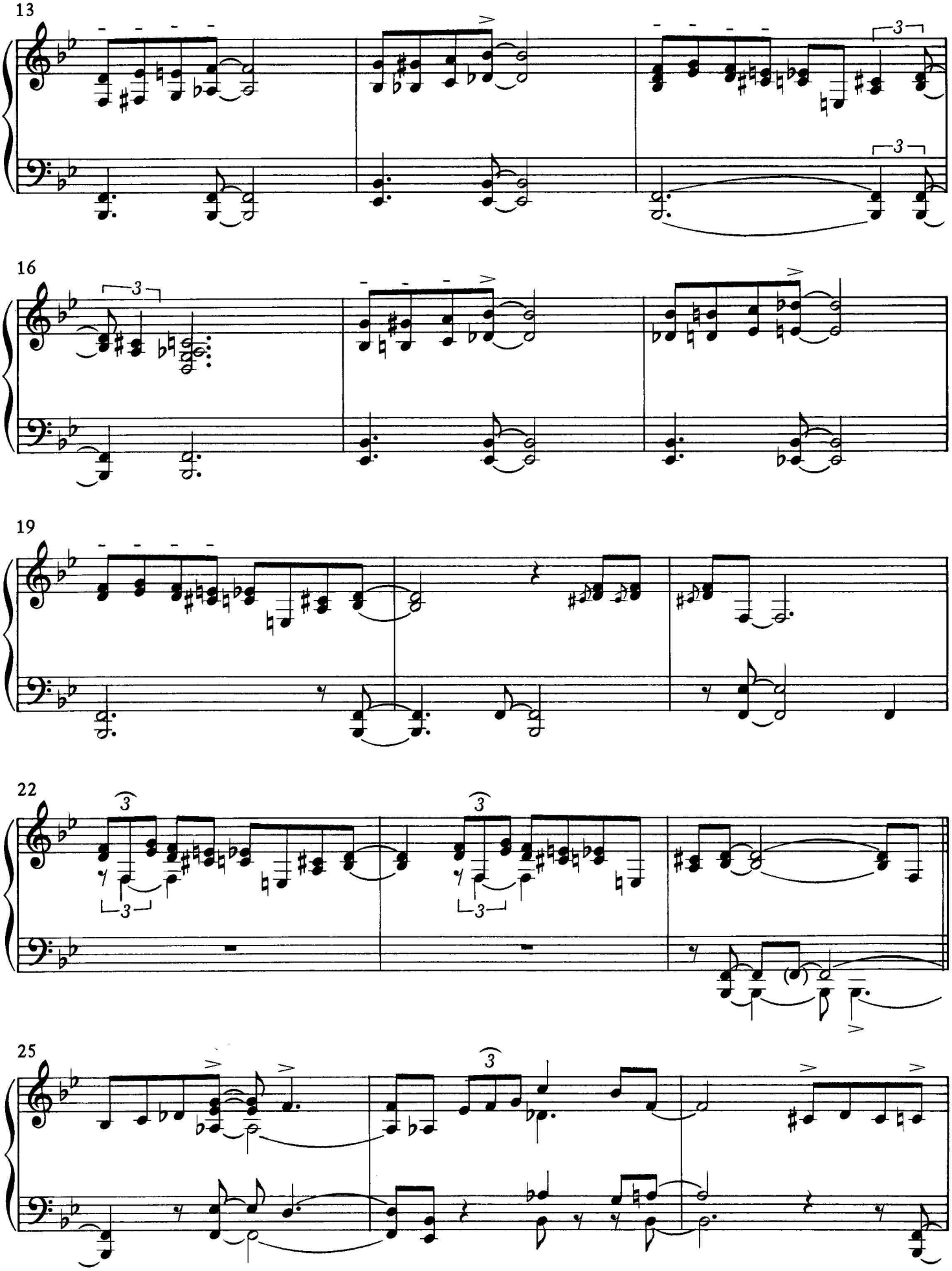
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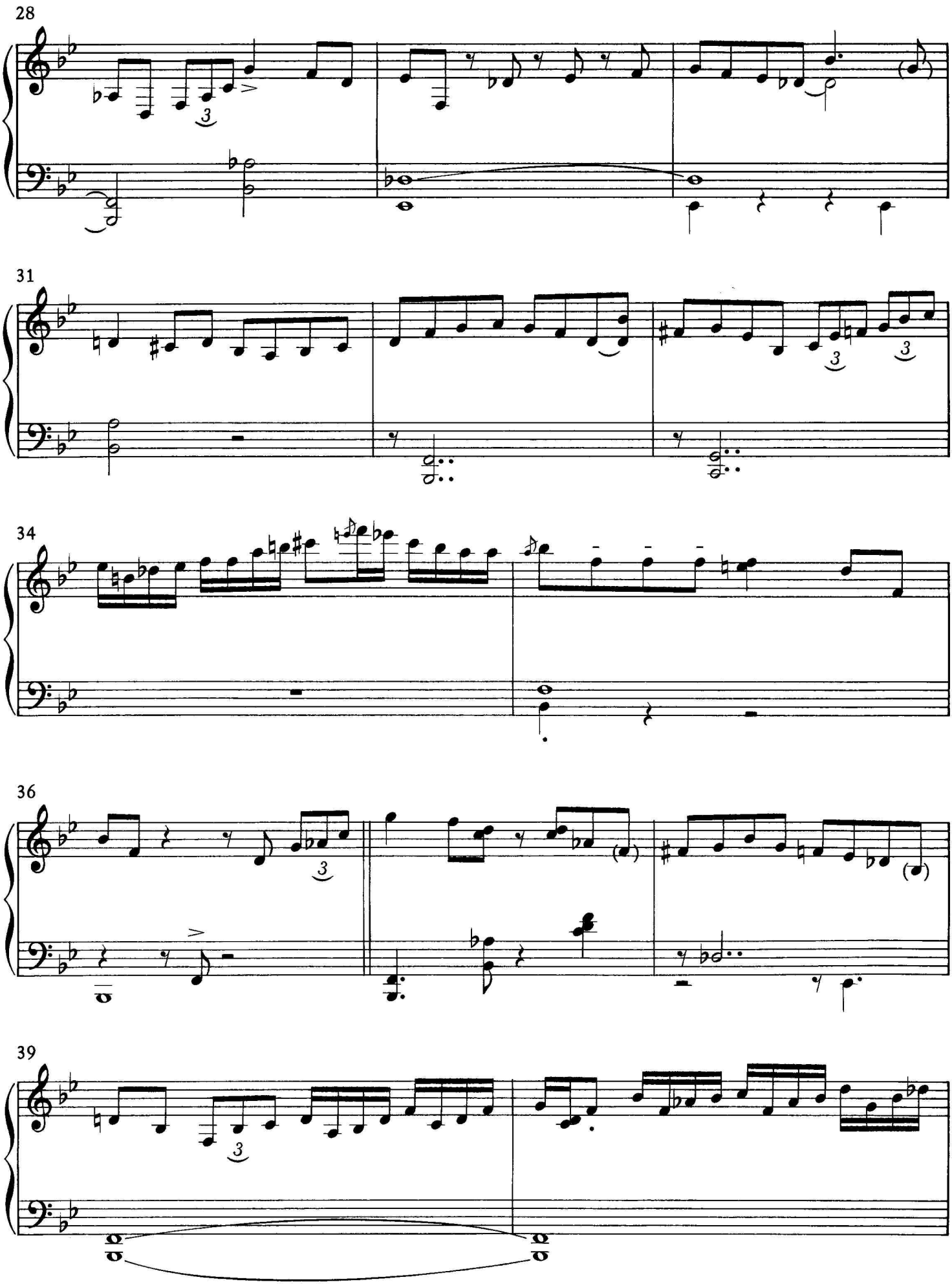
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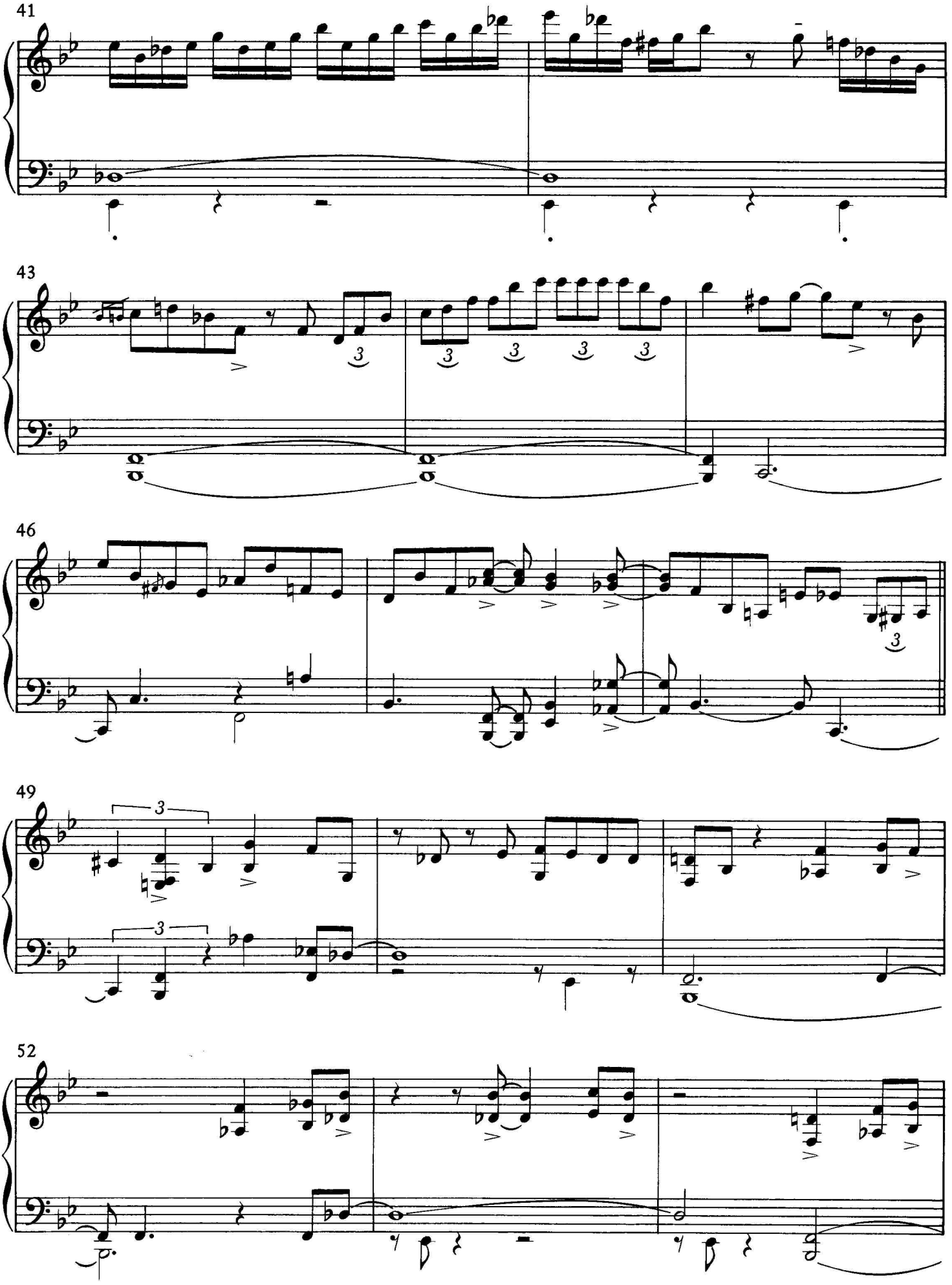
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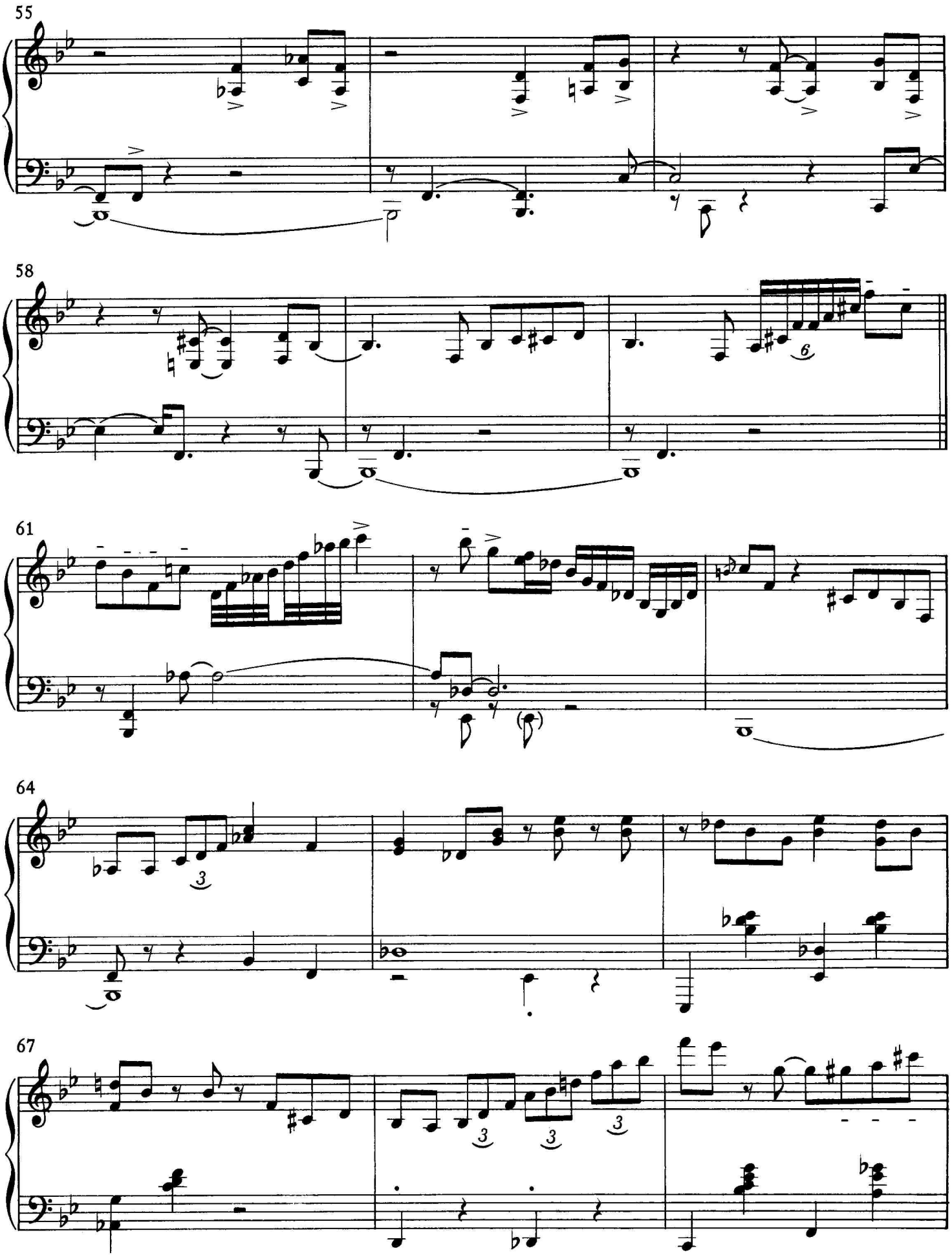
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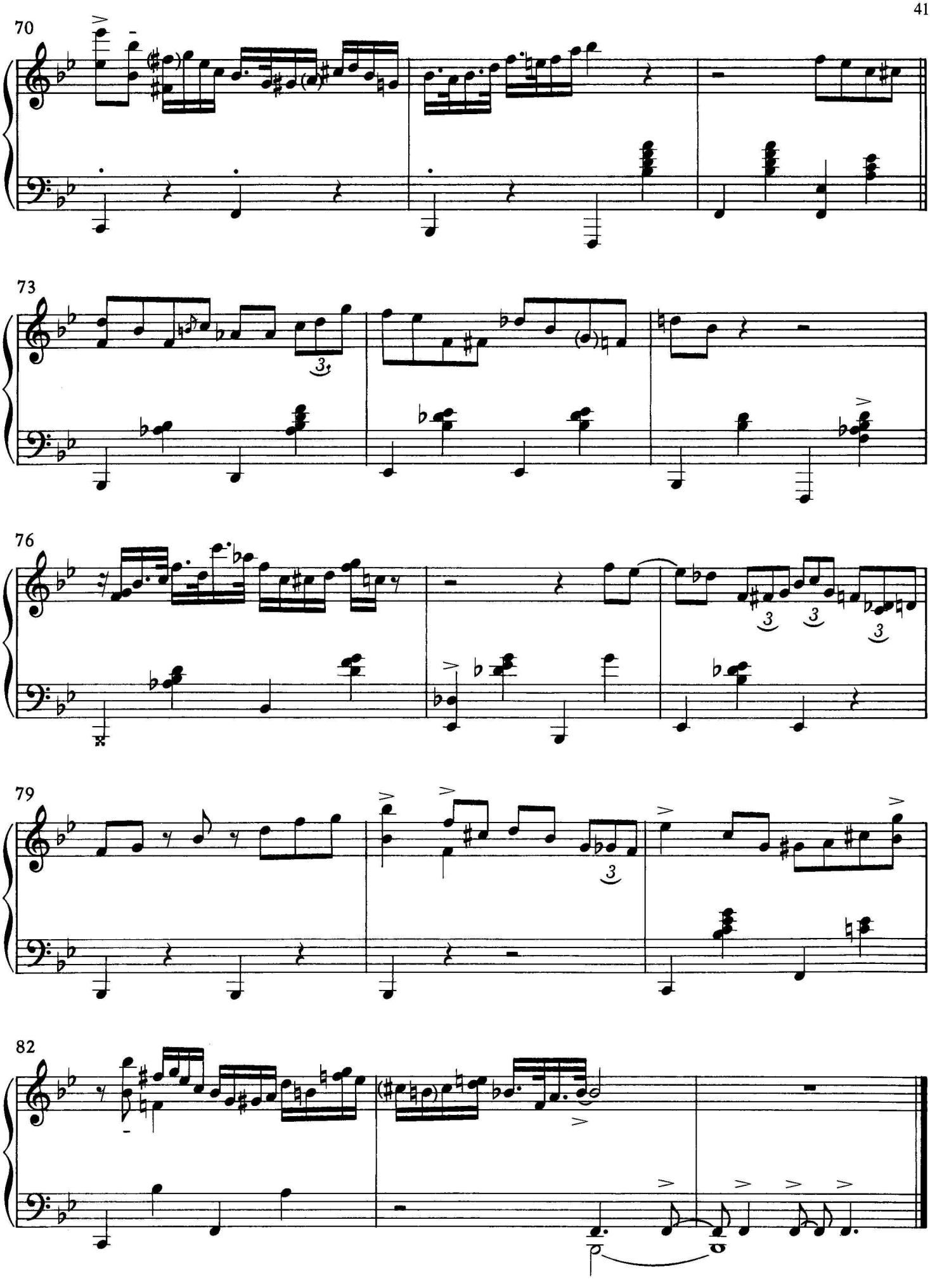
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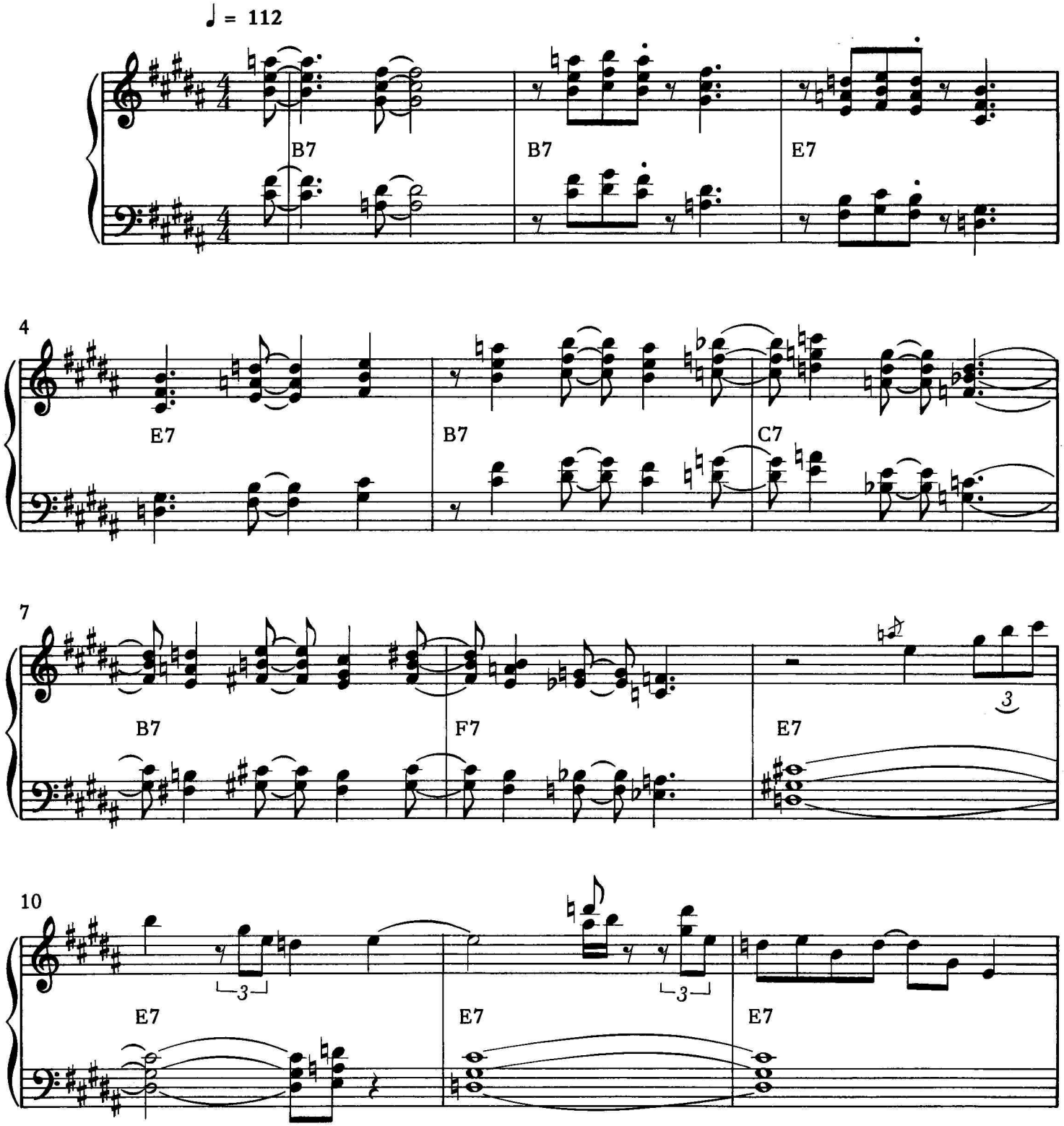
Tunji (Toon-Jee)

by JOHN COLTRANE



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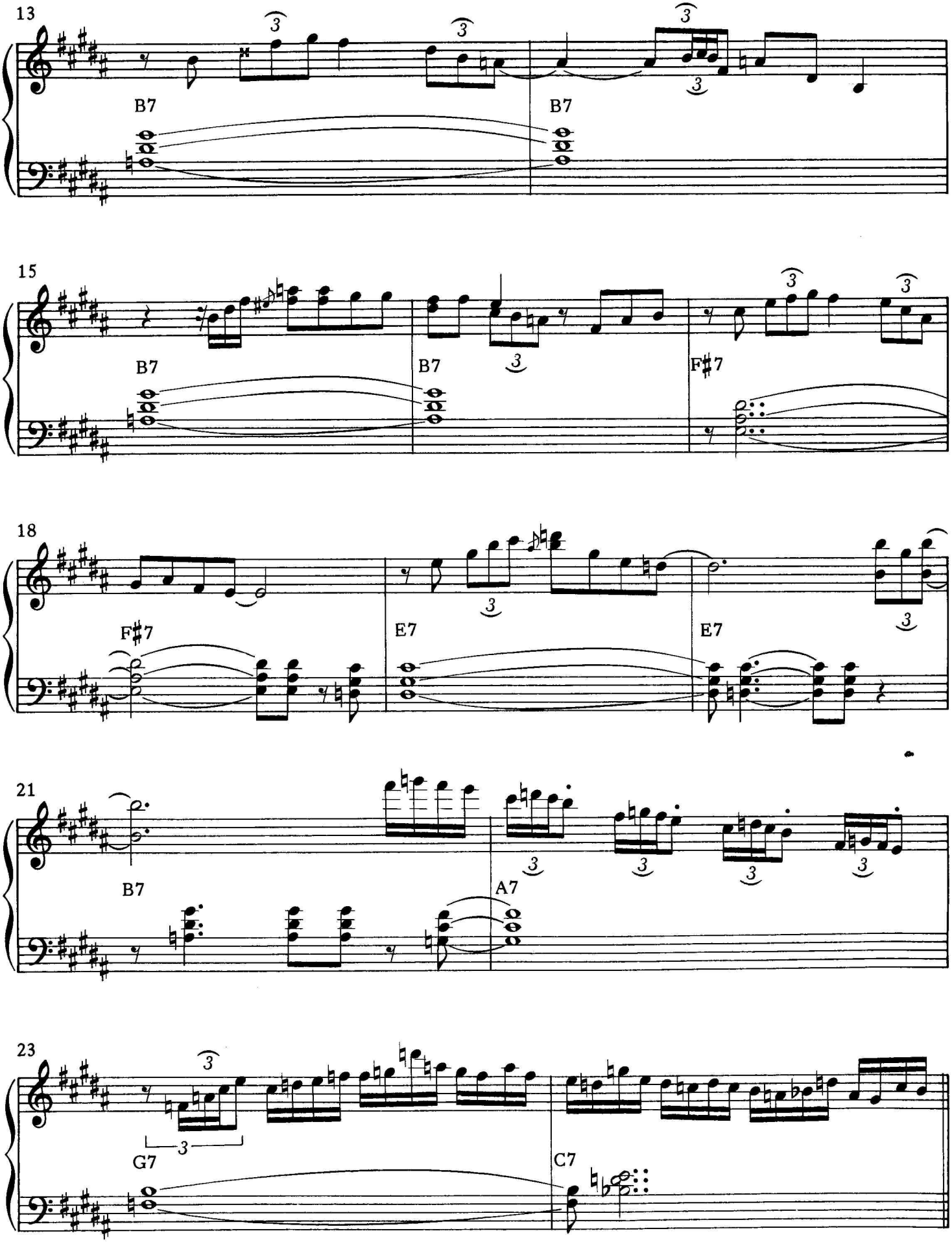
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B7
B7
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B7
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F♯7
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E7
E7
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B7
A7
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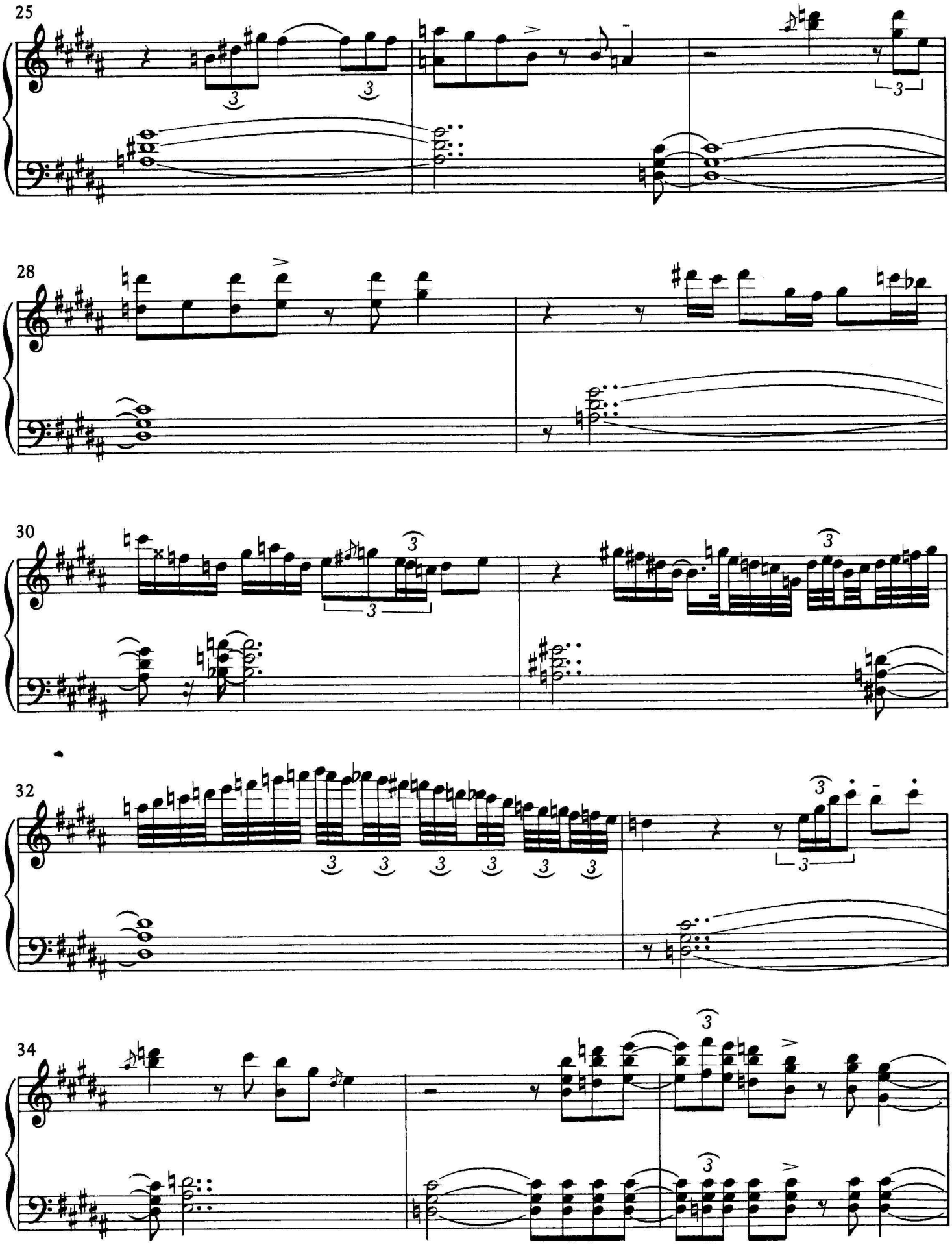
G7
C7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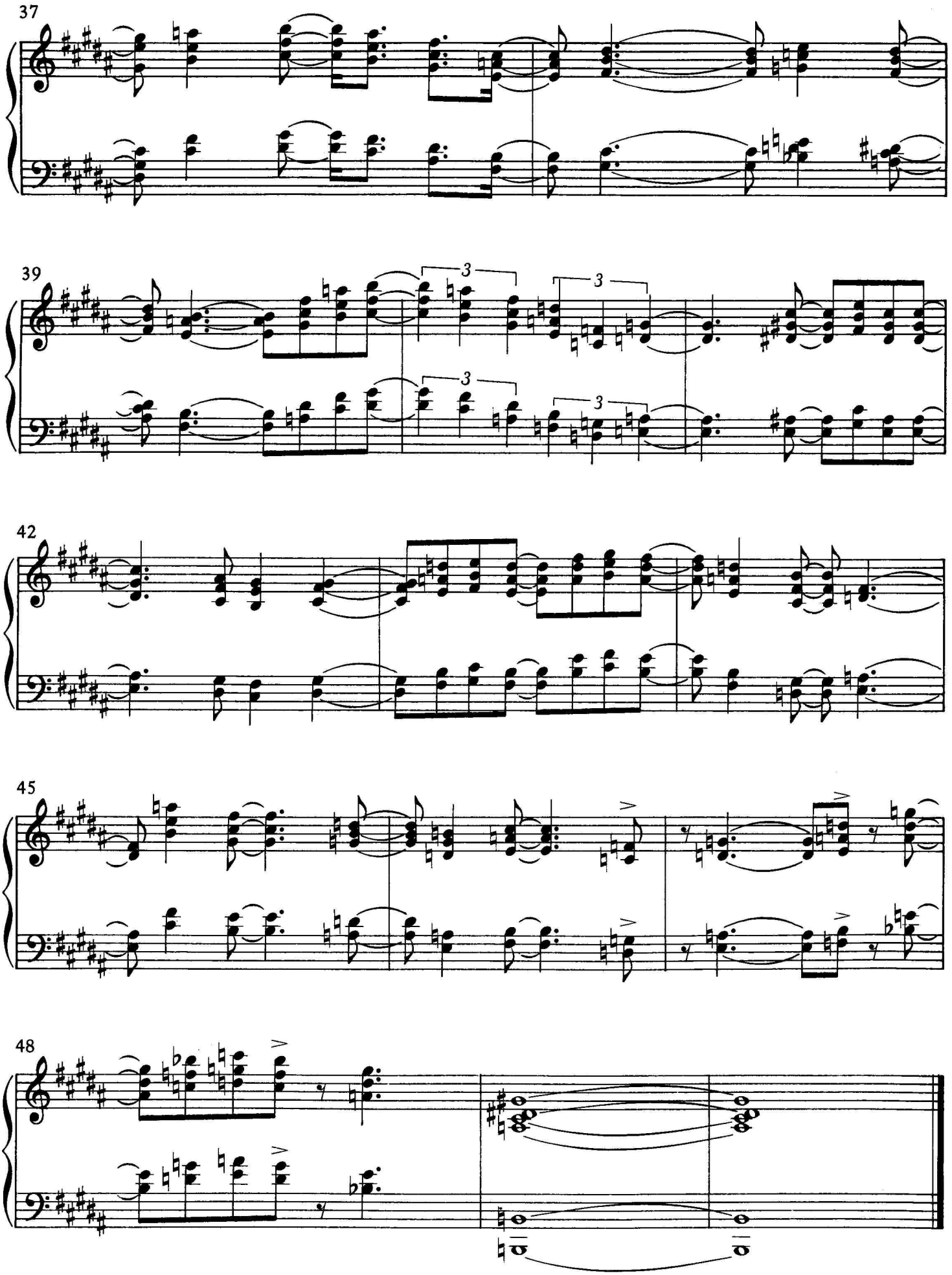
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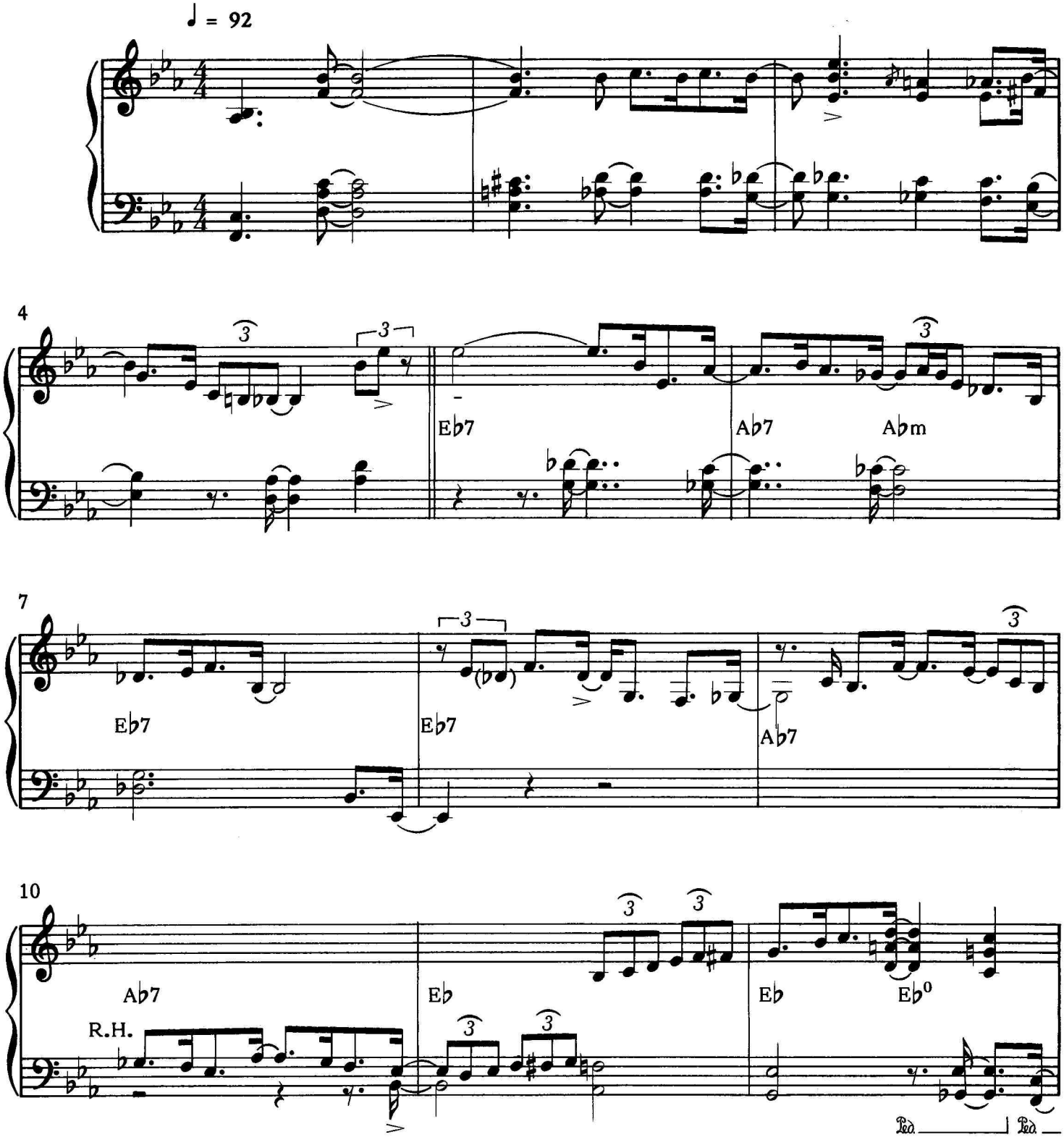
Too Much

by BRIAN PRIESTLEY



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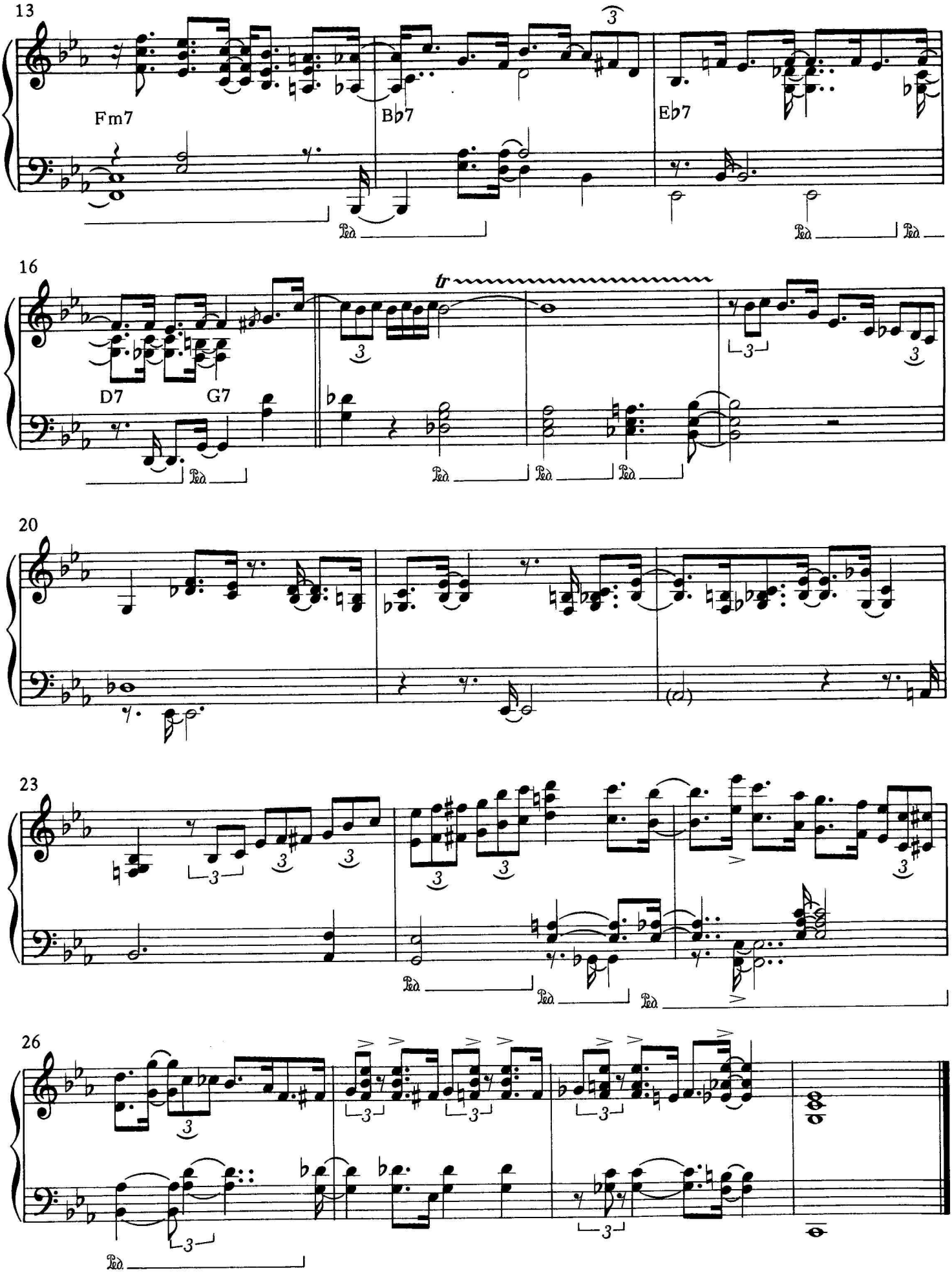

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